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SUMMARY  
OF THE  
PRINCIPAL EVENTS AND MEASURES  
OF THE  
VICEROYALTY  
OF  
HIS EXCELLENCY THE EARL OF MINTO  
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

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*From November 1905 to July 1910.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### GENERAL PERSIAN AFFAIRS CONCERNING PRIMARILY IMPERIAL RATHER THAN INDIAN INTERESTS.

Up till 1899 the affairs of Persia were of comparatively limited concern to India, but after Lord Curzon's arrival, the Government of India, at his instance, sought every opportunity of obtaining for itself a larger share in the councils of Great Britain in regard to Persia; with the result that Persian affairs for a time bulked very largely in the work of the Indian Foreign Department. But other tendencies prevailed; and a marked feature of the years that have followed has been the exclusion of India as far as possible from any voice in Persian questions other than those relating to the Persian Gulf, and to spheres in the south of Persia, of which the importance is held to be Indian rather than English. It is therefore with the affairs of the regions referred to, which are essential to India, that a review of Lord Minto's administration, in its Persian branch, is mainly concerned; but brief notice will first be taken of some other matters in Persia which, though kept largely without the Government of India's purview, affected British interests in that country generally, and touched at some points affairs with which the Government of India have special and direct concern.

The first of these matters, and the background, so to speak, of all other events and measures in Persia proper at the time, was the National Reform movement, with its attendant disturbances and unrest. Towards the close of 1905 His Majesty's Minister at Tehran brought prominently to notice the anarchical state of the province of Fars, and represented that in the opinion of several of his foreign colleagues the time was rapidly approaching when some joint action would have to be taken to force the Persian Government to meet its liabilities. A month later he reported the situation to be critical, and suggested the possibility of a general and successful rising against the Persian Government; whereupon the Government of India agreed to keep troops in readiness for the protection of the Legation and Consulates, and asked that they should be consulted, should their co-operation be necessary in any measures for the protection of British and Indian interests in Persia.

During the spring of 1906 the reform party continued to gain strength. In May the Shah had a paralytic stroke, and a lull ensued in the agitation. But in July the Mullahs took up the cause of the reformers and threatened to march in a body on Kerbela unless the Shah introduced reforms; at the same time, fearing the vengeance of the Government, no less than 14,000 Persians of all classes took refuge—or "Bast"—in the compound of the British Legation, and were insistent on the intervention in their behalf of Great Britain's Representative, declining to accept any promise from the Shah unless guaranteed by the British Government. Mr. Grant-Duff was instructed to endeavour to persuade the refugees to leave the Legation, and to explain to them that His Majesty's Government could not give guarantees on behalf of the Persian Government, nor interfere in the internal affairs of Persia. Eventually (August 9) a rescript by the Shah was read out at the British Legation, granting a National Assembly to assist the Persian Government in reforms. And a few days later Mr. Grant-Duff was informed that His Majesty's Government desired to avoid giving ground for the impression that recent events in Persia had been encouraged as an opportunity for British interference in Persian affairs or for exploiting the situation at the expense of Russia. He was instructed to endeavour to co-operate with his Russian colleague, who had been ordered to concert with him, as to the steps to be taken which would be likely to result in the situation being calmed. At the same time the Russian Government made overtures to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg for some sort of *modus vivendi* in view of the disturbances; and were informed in reply (August 13) that His Majesty's Government proposed to follow as far as possible a policy of non-interference in connection with the agitation. Soon after this, the British and Russian Governments



who were at this time in negotiation for the adjustment of their differences in Persia and elsewhere, offered a joint loan of £ 400,000 to Persia to relieve the more pressing needs of the State. This matter is dealt with separately further on; it is only necessary here to state that almost the first act of the Assembly—or Medjliss—when it opened its sittings on the 7th October 1906, was to reject the proffered advance, on the ground that the public revenues should not be pledged to foreigners. The Assembly's moving principle seemed to be independence of foreign control; and they were soon engaged in attacking the Belgium Customs administration, the Cossack Brigade, and the various foreign concessions.

Early in January 1907 the Shah died, and was succeeded by his son Muhammad Ali, who from the first showed every sign of being in disagreement with the new Assembly and the popular party.

In February 1907, the governments of Great Britain and Russia, in view of a possible development of an anti-foreign movement, exchanged views on the situation, and mutually agreed to abstain from all interference in the internal affairs of Persia, to act in close harmony with each other, and only to have recourse to military measures as a last resort in the defence of their own interests or subjects.

Disorders throughout the country continued to increase but did not as yet seriously menace the safety of foreigners, whom the popular party were anxious to protect for fear of foreign intervention.

In May the Shah recalled from exile the Amin-us-Sultan—for years the right-hand man of the late Shah—as Prime Minister; but the unfortunate man was murdered in the following August, owing apparently to a belief that he was in corrupt collusion with the Shah, and was about to obtain control of the Assembly in order to carry through another foreign loan. Coincident with this affair, it may be remarked in passing, came the announcement of the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement regarding Persia, to which separate allusion is made later. The tragic incident cowed for a time the reactionary party, and thereby aided the reform movement. On the 8th October the National Assembly passed a constitutional law, to which on the 12th November following the Shah took the oath of fidelity. This show of a reconciliation between the Shah and the Assembly brought about a temporary relaxation of the tension which existed before; but intrigues by the Shah's agents against the Assembly went on notwithstanding, and the reactionary party became very active when the Budget was passed limiting the civil list of the Shah, and suppressing the pension of several of the Court party.

Meantime the political horizon was more threatening than ever; the assassination and dethronement of the Shah being openly discussed. In December 1907 the Ministry resigned. Several of the members were arrested by the Shah, but were released on the intervention of the British Minister. A few days later (December 22) the Shah gave a personal assurance to the British and Russian Ministers to respect and uphold the Constitution; and steps were then taken to let the Constitutionists know that the two Legations considered it incumbent upon them to see that the Shah observed his pledges. But much of the good effect caused by this co-operation between Russia and Great Britain was neutralised by the hostile efforts of the German Legation. The Shah soon recommenced his campaign against the Assembly; and on the 28th February 1908 an attempt was made to assassinate him as he was driving through the streets of Tehran.

Early in June there was a fresh popular outburst against the Shah, and an agitation was started demanding the dismissal of some of His Majesty's favourite courtiers. Negotiations continued till the 21st, but it was obvious that conciliation was impossible. Early on the 23rd June, the Shah's forces in an attempt to arrest some leaders of the popular party, provoked a fight, which resulted in the Medjliss or Assembly buildings being destroyed by gun-fire, under the direction of Colonel Liakhoff, the Commander of the Cossack bodyguard of the Shah. Serious damage was also done to life and property. Martial law was proclaimed and Colonel Liakhoff was appointed military governor of Tehran. The Con-

stitution was suspended, and the Assembly dissolved for three months, with the promise of a new election at the end of that time.

This *coup d'état* on the part of the Shah somewhat crushed the popular movement in Tehran, but it was the signal for a nationalist outburst in Tabriz, a town in the Persian province of Azerbaijan, where much fighting occurred. During July and August the situation showed no improvement; in fact early in the latter month the revolutionaries were encouraged by news of the grant of the Constitution at Constantinople. Great Britain and Russia accordingly presented an identic Note to the Shah (September 8), which while disavowing all wish to interfere in Persian internal affairs, went on to say that in the interests of "general prosperity and trade and of the definite pacification of the country," it was desirable that His Majesty should announce that his decision in regard to the maintenance of organic laws which had been granted by him to the Empire, was irrevocable; and that he should summon the new Assembly to meet in November. The Shah in reply issued a rescript fixing November 14 as the day for convoking the Assembly, and ordering an electoral law to be published on the 27th October. Tabriz, owing to its state of revolt, was specially exempted from the operation of this rescript, and no elections were to be held there until order was restored. Nothing, however, was done anywhere in the way of preparation for the elections; and a bogus agitation was prepared and petitions presented to the Shah against the Constitution (November 7). The British and Russian Ministers thereupon strongly urged the Shah to keep his pledge and convoke the Assembly at once. A rescript was, however, issued (November 22) abolishing the constitution; but the vigorous protests of Great Britain and Russia seemed to produce some effect, for the rescript was withdrawn (23rd) and revoked.

The opening of 1909 found Great Britain and Russia considering in full accord some joint plan for the prevention of the process of disintegration which was then in such rapid progress in Persia, and which threatened their economic interests. Six months had elapsed since the destruction of the Medjliss and the dissolution of its Assembly, and the Shah had failed to fulfil his promises or to introduce a single reform. The country was in a state of anarchy; but with the exception of the movement in Tabriz, and abortive risings in favour of constitutional government at Kermanshah and as far east as Meshed, popular discontent of the Shah had elsewhere not shown itself in acts of overt hostility. But early in January 1909 Ispahan followed the example set by Tabriz, and the powerful Bakhtiari tribe of those parts declared themselves on the side of the Nationalists and began to talk of marching on Tehran. But the Shah remained obdurate alike to the threats of his subjects and the warnings of the British and Russian Governments. In March the Russian Government deemed it necessary, in view of the disturbed state of affairs, to strengthen its consular guards at Resht and Astrabad on the Caspian, and at Meshed. By the end of March the National movement had spread to the ports of the Persian Gulf, and gave signs of spreading to the north-eastern districts of Persia. In April the Tangistani tribesmen from the hinterland of Bushire assumed the government of that place, seized the Customs in the Nationalist interest, and then got so out of hand and so serious a menace to the lives and property of Europeans that a party of British blue-jackets was landed to maintain order, and remained until the middle of May.

Tabriz meantime had been closely invested by tribesmen fighting in the name of the Shah; and the reports of the pitiful condition of the inhabitants, the scarcity of food, the fear of an attack upon the Consulates, and the likelihood of a general massacre in the event of the surrender of the town, forced the British and Russian Governments to intervene. The Shah was induced (April (20) by their representatives to grant an armistice; and on April 24th, at the request of the British Government, the Russian Government despatched about 4,000 troops of all arms to Tabriz to protect foreign institutions and subjects in the town, to effect the supply of provisions, and to maintain safe communications between Tabriz and Julfa. The force was instructed to abstain from any interference in the struggle between the two parties, and to undertake no administrative duties. These proofs of the strength of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of August 1907, and of the determination of the two Powers to act vigorously if necessary, probably helped to induce the Shah to consider seriously a renewed programme of reforms

which the two Powers had meantime presented to him at Tehran on the 22nd April. On the 3rd May, Sir Charles Hardinge interviewed the Persian Minister in London, and advised him as to the action the Shah should take to end the present situation, and to forestall any further action on the part of the two Powers; and on the 4th the Shah formally intimated his acceptance of the reform programme presented to him by Great Britain and Russia.

On the 10th May, His Majesty signed a proclamation announcing that the Constitution was again to be applied, and granting an amnesty to political offenders. But it was too late. A band of revolutionaries from Resht, who had captured Kazvin on the 5th May, expressed the intention of marching upon Tehran, and the Bakhtiari at Ispahan also announced a similar intention. Both parties set out in the third week of June; the Resht revolutionaries under the leadership of the Sipahdar, the Bakhtiari under Sardar Assad, lately returned from Paris. They were known to be determined men, who were bound in any conflict with the Shah's tatterdemalion troops to give a good account of themselves. Panic now seized the Persian Cabinet, which expected Great Britain and Russia to advance money and save them from their quandary; but the terms of the joint-programme of the two Powers precluded any loan until after the promulgation of the electoral law. However, with a view to help the Persian Government to stay the advance of the revolutionaries, the two Legations ordered their Consuls-General from Ispahan to go out and overtake Sardar Assad and explain to him that the Constitution had been restored, and that preliminary work for the Convocation was proceeding on lines recommended by the two Powers, whose programme involved no curtailment of Persian independence. The Consuls-General met the Sardar at Kum on the 26th June. But Sardar Assad declined to turn back. He said the Legations were grossly deceived, and that all that was being done was a sham. He promised, however, to wait where he was for the time being, and meanwhile he would formulate certain demands in concert with the various Nationalist centres. On July 1st, Sardar Assad advanced from Kum, and on the 5th presented the Consuls-General with a list of demands, which he asked them to lay before the Shah. The demands included, among other things, the withdrawal from Persia of the Russian troops (whose attitude had become very arbitrary and anti-Nationalist), the control of the Shah's army, the banishment of some of the Shah's officials and of certain "traitors and persons distrusted by the people", and the permission to maintain a Nationalist force in the capital until the promised Constitution was an accomplished fact. The demands were regarded by the representatives of the two Powers as unreasonable, and they declined any further communication with the revolutionary leaders.

An attack upon Tehran now seemed imminent, and in view of possible danger to Europeans, Russia massed a body of troops at Baku, whence a force was despatched to the Persian port of Enzeli, and advanced south to Kazvin, under instructions not to approach nearer to Tehran except in case of serious danger to foreign lives and interests. In a note to the Powers (July 3) the Russian Government said their troops would remain in Persia only until the lives and property of the Russian and other foreign diplomatic representatives and subjects, and the safety of foreign institutions, seemed to be completely ensured.

The revolutionary forces advanced, and after some skirmishing with the Shah's soldiers, under the Russian Colonel Liakhoff, entered Tehran (July 13). Street fighting continued for two or three days, and the revolutionaries succeeded in acquiring complete mastery of the situation. Early on the morning of the 16th July, the Shah, with his wife, took refuge in the Russian Legation, where a combined guard of the two Powers was provided for his protection. A meeting of Nationalist nobles—an extraordinary Grand Council, as it was called—formally deposed the Shah Muhammad Ali (July 16), and chose his eleven-year old son, Sultan Ahmad Mirza, to succeed him. The little Shah entered Tehran in state on the 20th July, and was formally recognized by the two Legations on the following day. The National Council set to work to organize the administration, to arrange for the elections, and to repress outbreaks of brigandage and disorder in the provinces, but it was sorely handicapped by lack of money.

The ex-Shah left for the Crimea on September 9th, with the promise of a pension of 100,000 tomans during good behaviour. His debts were taken over by

the Persian Government, who received in return the surrender of His Majesty's private estates, and the State jewels. The Assembly was opened by the young Shah on November 15th.

Meanwhile the town of Shiraz was threatened by Saiyid Abdul Hussain, who wished to avenge a defeat he had sustained at the hands of the Kavami tribe; and the British Government deemed it necessary to despatch (July 25) 40 sepoy and a Royal Marine maxim gun detachment from Bushire as a reinforcement for the Consular guard. A warship was also posted at Bushire.

At the end of October the notorious nomad tribe of Shah sevans, inhabiting the Caucasus frontier, took up the cudgels, avowedly in the name of the new Shah, but probably purely for loot; and they were soon afterwards joined by the Karadaghis. They seized Ardebil, a town close to the Russian frontier, early in November; and the situation which had occurred earlier in the year at Tabriz was now repeated here: the Russian Government again sent troops to a beleaguered Persian city.

There remains little further to record during the period under review. The trouble at Ardebil ended early in 1910, and quiet had been restored in most parts of the country. In April a serious conflict arose between the Cabinet and the Medjliss; but it was subsequently composed, and in May, as shown elsewhere, negotiations were again proceeding between England, Russia and Persia on the question of loans and concessions. Disturbances, however, continued in the neighbourhood of Shiraz and in Southern Persia; and His Majesty's Government decided (June 1910) that the extra force at Shiraz, including the naval detachment, should not be withdrawn owing to the insecure state of the Fars roads.

The Russian Government still retained troops in Kazvin, Ardebil and Tabriz, in spite of the strong agitation throughout the country for their removal; and at the close of the period comprised in this summary, it was reported that as a condition of their withdrawal certain conditions were being demanded, including an extension of the copper mining concession in Karajadagh, and the right of Russian motor cars to enter Persia free of duty, etc.

Having thus outlined very briefly the course of events in Persia during the period 1905-10, it will be convenient now to turn to a prominent matter which owed its existence largely to the direction in which those events had tended.

The Anglo-Russian Agreement regarding Persia.

Lord Curzon's Government had in their time recognized that the affairs of Persia seemed to be drifting towards general anarchy and disruption, and that there was a tendency on the part of foreign Powers, especially Russia, to turn this position to account; and had recommended (September 1899), as the best means of combating this situation, the conclusion of an agreement with Russia "for the separate patronage and development of Persia in distinct and clearly defined compartments by Great Britain and Russia—in other words, for the recognition of British and Russian spheres of interest in the dominions of the Shah." This, and later representations to the same end, bore fruit eventually in a very clear declaration by His Majesty's Government in 1902 of its special concern in the southern parts of Persia, and the Persian Gulf, and of its determination to prevent encroachments by other Powers in those regions. But the proposal to partition Persia into spheres of interest did not appear acceptable to either the British or Russian Governments, and was not therefore further proceeded with at the time. It contained, however, the seed which some five years later blossomed into the understanding with Russia, of which we are now tracing the development.

As already shown, a very serious state of disorder and unrest began to declare itself in Persia towards the end of 1905. The condition of the country had for some time been growing more and more intolerable. The Shah and the Court party had squandered the resources of the country and could now only subsist and carry on the government, on foreign loans procurable on conditions calculated to extinguish gradually the independence of the country; and this state of things had engendered a very widespread and dangerous spirit of revolt.

In this situation Great Britain and Russia, who had both recently granted large loans to Persia on various securities, recognized a serious menace to their interests, and a need for co-operation in order to force the Persian Government to meet its liabilities.

The Persian Government was now in desperate straits for money. They had, as already stated, thoroughly exploited the national resources, and now required over and above the ordinary needs of administration, funds for the suppression of the prevailing anarchy and riot. In December 1905 they asked the British Government for a loan of £800,000, and threatened that if unsuccessful in their request, they would be forced to have recourse to Russia, who were prepared to lend them about a million and a half sterling. The Government of India were prepared to grant the loan on certain conditions; but His Majesty's Government after consulting Russia and offering to act in friendly accord with her in the matter, eventually refused (March 1906) the advance on the understanding that Russia would do likewise if approached on the subject. The British Government considered that, in the present condition of Persia, a loan would be of no benefit to her; while the concessions available in exchange for it were of doubtful eventual value.

The direct consequence of this understanding between the British and Russian Governments to refuse a loan to Persia was the offer of a German loan. On the 10th May 1906 information from a usually well informed source was received of an impending German loan under cover of Belgian financiers of £1,250,000. The Grand Vizier denied that any such project was in progress, but added that as England and Russia declined financial assistance to Persia, the latter must try elsewhere to obtain money. On the day following (May 15th) it became known that the Shah had suffered a serious paralytic stroke and was in a critical condition; and both the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran thought it would be advisable to have a sum of money at their disposal, to be used, should the Shah die, to prevent anarchy, and to secure the orderly succession of his son to the throne. Lord Minto's Government was approached in the matter; and a sum of £50,000 was provided by them, and held in readiness for payment to the Shah's successor.

Some four months later (September 1906) a fresh rumour of a large German loan to Persia, induced the Russian Government to press forward negotiations for an immediate Anglo-Russian advance in order to block the German project. His Majesty's Government were favourably disposed to the proposal, but they wished to make the joint-loan something which would in practice be a general settlement with Russia in regard to Persia. The British Government had already got a lien on the customs of the southern and Gulf ports of Persia, as security for their previous loan to Persia in 1903-04; and they now opened negotiations in the direction of a general settlement with Russia by informing the Russian Government that they were willing to join in a loan of £400,000 to Persia, and suggesting that as security for their half of the advance, they should—

“Take lien additional to that already existing on customs of southern and Gulf ports and also receive undertaking from Persian Government not to grant other Powers railway, road or telegraph concessions in district east of line from Birjand to Bunder Abbas. This would leave Russia free to take security or make her own terms west of that line;

The Government of India strongly protested against these terms; but they were informed in reply (September 24, 1906) that—

“His Majesty's Government have decided that the present state of affairs in Russia, the state of affairs in Persia, and the possible attitude of one other European Power at least as to the Persian question, all make it eminently desirable to either create or seize the opportunity of coming to terms with Russia while guarding vigilantly the whole body of our own solid and legitimate interests both Indian and British, military and commercial.”

Further developments in regard to the Anglo-Russian loan will be noticed separately later on. Great Britain's proposed terms to Russia, it will be noticed, kept Seistan well outside the sphere of Russian intervention; and this caused some delay in the further progress of the negotiations, because the Russian General Staff considered that in leaving Seistan within the British zone an important strategical point was being abandoned. But by February 1907 matters had assumed a more definite form. On the 28th of that month the Secretary of State telegraphed the

summary of the Russian proposals respecting Persia which showed that the Russian line was to run from Kasr-i-Shirin through Ispahan, Yezd and Kakh to the Afghan frontier near Kuhsan, the British line running from Bunder Abbas through Kerman, Birjand and Gazik to the Afghan frontier. It was stipulated that each country was reciprocally to engage not to seek herself or support her own subjects or subjects of any third Power in seeking political or commercial concessions, such as for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, etc., in the sphere of the other; nor to oppose, directly or indirectly, concessions supported by the other country in its own zone. All Persian customs, except in Fars and the Persian Gulf, were to continue to be the guarantee for Russian loans. The preamble of the proposals mentioned the integrity and independence of Persia and promised equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations.

Discussion followed regarding certain amendments which were proposed. His Majesty's Government, for instance, wanted the Russian line to terminate near Zulfikar, where the Afghan and Russian frontiers intersect, instead of near Kuhsan, some 70 miles or so further south. This point was ultimately conceded by Russia. Further His Majesty's Government wished for the insertion of a clause mentioning the fact that Great Britain had a special interest in the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Persian Gulf; for without some such provision public opinion in England would probably regard the agreement as defective. The Government of India too were particularly insistent on the importance of this amendment. But the Russian Government demurred to the proposal on the ground that it was very important to avoid everything which might provoke the objections of third Powers to the Agreement. The clause suggested would not fail to create umbrage. Besides Persia, there was also Turkey, who literally owned more than half of the Persian Gulf, and who must consider herself as directly interested in the question. Eventually, in deference to these objections on the part of Russia, and in order to expedite the conclusion of the Agreement, the proposal was abandoned, the Russian Government being informed that note had been taken of their declaration that they did not deny the special interest of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf.

The Agreement was ultimately signed by Sir A. Nicholson and M. Isvolsky on the 31st August 1907, in terms of which the following is a translation:—

*“Arrangement concerning Persia.*

The Governments of Great Britain and Russia having mutually engaged to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and sincerely desiring the preservation of order throughout that country and its peaceful development, as well as the permanent establishment of equal advantages for the trade and industry of all other nations;

Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economic reasons, a special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain provinces of Persia adjoining, or in the neighbourhood of, the Russian frontier on the one hand, and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other hand; and being desirous of avoiding all cause of conflict between their respective interests in the above-mentioned Provinces of Persia;

Have agreed on the following terms:—

I.

Great Britain engages not to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of British subjects or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a political or commercial nature—such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraph, roads, transport, insurance, etc.—beyond a line starting from Kasr-i-Shirin, passing through Ispahan, Yazd, Kakhk, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier at the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Great Britain engages not to seek the concessions referred to.

II.

Russia, on her part, engages not to seek for herself and not to support, in favour of Russian subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any concessions of a political or commercial nature—such as concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, etc.,—beyond a line going from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kerman, and ending at Bunder Abbas, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demand



for similar concessions in this region which are supported by the British Government. It is understood that the above mentioned places are included in the region in which Russia engages not to seek the concessions referred to.

### III.

Russia, on her part, engages not to oppose, without previous arrangement with Great Britain, the grant of any concessions whatever to British subjects in the regions of Persia situated between the lines mentioned in Articles I and II.

Great Britain undertakes a similar engagement as regards the grant of concessions to Russian subjects in the same regions of Persia.

All concessions existing at present in the regions indicated in Articles I and II are maintained.

### IV.

It is understood that the revenues of all the Persian customs, with the exception of those of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, revenues guaranteeing the amortization and the interest of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" up to the date of the signature of the present Arrangement, shall be devoted to the same purpose as in the past.

It is equally understood that the revenues of the Persian customs of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, as well as those of the fisheries on the Persian shore of the Caspian Sea and those of the Posts and Telegraphs, shall be devoted, as in the past, to the service of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Arrangement.

### V.

In the event of irregularities occurring in the amortization or the payment of the interest of the Persian loans concluded with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" and with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Arrangement, and in the event of the necessity arising for Russia to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the first-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article II of the present Arrangement, or for Great Britain to establish control over the sources of the revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the second-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article I of the present Arrangement, the British and Russian Governments undertake to enter beforehand into a friendly exchange of ideas with a view to determine, in agreement with each other, the measures of control in question and to avoid all interference which would not be in conformity with the principles governing the present Arrangement."

On the 20th September 1907, the Secretary of State telegraphed that His Majesty's Government has arranged with the Russian Government that ratifications as to the Anglo-Russian Convention should be exchanged on the 20th or 25th September, and that the whole text should be published on the 26th September.

Telegraphing on the 25th Sir C. Spring Rice, reported that the Russian Minister and he had communicated to the Persian Government the Persian part of the Anglo-Russian Agreement and had informed them that the Agreement would be communicated to the Great Power. As the Russian Minister thought that a written statement that there was no secret clause attached to the Agreement would be an embarrassing precedent, they had made a verbal communication to that effect. The Secretary of State telegraphed on the same day that, in the opinion of the Foreign Office, the Anglo-Russian arrangement regarding Persia would clearly prevent the construction of a railway by His Majesty's Government as far as Tehran, but in their opinion the wording of the pledge of 1888 would justify His Majesty's Government in asking to be allowed to construct a line in Southern Persia, if they so desired in the event, of a concession being obtained by the Russian Government to construct one in the north. As the Russian Government had by the new arrangement undertaken not to oppose concessions supported by His Majesty's Government in the British sphere nor without previous discussion in the neutral zone, the British position was now inadvertently stronger in these spheres than it was before the Convention was signed.

Mr. Marling telegraphed on the 4th November 1907 that the substance of the Persian reply to his note communicating the Persian part of the Anglo-Russian Agreement was as follows :—

“ The Agreement concerns only the contracting Powers ; and Persia being absolutely independent considers herself as unaffected by any kind of agreement between two or more foreign States respecting her. Persia will strive to improve her friendly relations with foreign Powers in accordance with treaties and the principles of the open door. Persia will scrupulously carry out her obligations as regards loans. The Persian Government will communicate a copy of this note to the representatives of friendly Powers.”

To return now to the subject of the proposed Anglo-Russian loan to Persia.

The financial situation in Persia. Arrangements regarding the Anglo-Indian loan of 1903-04 ; and the proposed Anglo-Russian loan.

The earlier history of the subject is interlaced with the foregoing account of the Anglo-Russian Agreement. It has been shown there how the British and Russian Governments in September 1906, during the revolutionary movement which was then proceeding in Persia, had agreed to offer the Persian Government a joint-loan to relieve the more pressing necessities of the State.

But a few days after the proposal was communicated to the Persian Government, the revolutionaries succeeded in inducing the Shah to grant their demands for a National Representative Assembly. On the 7th October 1906 the Assembly was formally opened, and at once showed its power by refusing absolutely the proposed Anglo-Russian loan, on the ground that the public revenues ought not to be pledged to foreigners. At the same time in order to provide itself with funds, it decided to establish a National Bank. In January 1907 the Shah Muzaffar-ud-Din died, and was succeeded by his son Muhammad Ali ; who, in response to the popular demand, at once granted a charter (February 7, 1907) for the proposed National Bank of Persia. Under this concession all state revenues were to be paid into the Bank, which had the right to build railways, roads and undertake agricultural and mining operations ; to fish for pearls in the Persian Gulf ; and, further, to have the practical monopoly of the supply of silver for minting. The Imperial Bank of Persia had at present the sole right to issue bank notes, but this right was, on the expiry of the Imperial Bank's concession, to pass to the new National Bank. Loans were to be made to the Government to the extent of one-fifth of the Bank's capital.

But the hoped-for National Bank never came to birth ; and no progress was made in procuring ways and means for carrying on the administration. The Government, had it dared, would have borrowed abroad to meet its liabilities ; but the Nationalist party remained unshaken in their resolve to approve no loan, nor concession, unless approved by their Assembly, whose moving principle was independence of foreign control. Hence little attention was given to the Anglo-Russian loan proposal ; and for the next two years it practically dropped out of serious discussion. Rumours were prevalent of a possible German loan, but nothing came of them.

But though unwilling to incur fresh advances from abroad, the Persian Government had considerable obligations to meet on account of loans already contracted ; and it will be convenient to insert here some account of the steps taken by Great Britain about this time in regard to the payments due to her by Persia on account of the British loan of 1903-04. In April 1907 His Majesty's Government applied to the Persian Government for payment of the interest on the British loan of 1903-04 which was then due. The Persian Government begged for a delay of six months ; and this was granted by His Majesty's Government on the condition that the silver clause was eliminated from the charter which had just been granted for the National Bank of Persia—an arrangement which the Persian Government promised to secure. For the next few months the financial condition of the Government remained very bad ; and the continued want of money made itself painfully felt.

On the 28th August 1907, His Majesty's Government consented, at the request of the Persian Government, to the suspension of the sinking fund on the British loan of 1903-04, payment to be made of interest alone, in return for an understanding on the part of Persia that she would not contract any foreign loan



without first giving the option to England and Russia ; and that she renewed her engagement not to grant to the Russian Bank or any other parties the monopoly of coining silver in the State mint. At the same time the right to demand payment of arrears of the sinking fund at any time within the next three years was reserved by His Majesty's Government, unless some serious efforts were made to put the finances in order in the meantime. In October 1907 His Majesty's Government again addressed the Persian Government respecting the non-payment of the interest of the British loan of 1903-04, and reminded them that no reply had yet been given to the conditions His Majesty's Government attached to their assent to the request of Persia for a temporary suspension of the sinking fund of that loan. But months went by without any compliance being given to the terms of this communication ; and accordingly in the middle of February 1908 His Majesty's Representative again addressed the Persian Government, informing them that unless the interest due was paid forthwith, and a formal acceptance of the conditions formulated was given without delay, His Majesty's Government would demand the immediate payment of the full amount of the annuity instead of the interest only. This remonstrance, however, produced no more effect than the preceding ones had done ; and in the end of July 1908, the Persian Government was informed in effect that the terms laid down in the British note of the 27th August 1907 could no longer be open to discussion, and must be held to be binding.

By March 1909 the Nationalist movement had spread to the Persian Gulf. In the middle of the month Nationalists assumed control of Bandar Abbas and its customs. His Majesty's Minister accordingly instructed the Resident in the Persian Gulf to inform the Nationalists that the customs receipts of the Gulf were pledged to His Majesty's Government, and to ask that the Bandar Abbas receipts should be paid to the Consulate ; and at the same time His Excellency informed the Persian Government that he should consider import duties paid to the Nationalists by British merchants as duly acquitted, and that he was claiming from the Nationalists the customs receipts on account of the overdue interest on the British loan, secured on the southern customs. His Majesty's Consul however urged that it was desirable, in the interests of tranquillity, to leave the Nationalists a portion of the customs receipts for the payment of the men they had under arms ; and he was allowed to use his discretion in the matter.

Bushire soon followed the lead of Bandar Abbas. On the 22nd March 1909, Saiyid Murtaza Ahrami from the hinterland, took over control of the Government on behalf of the Nationalists ; and on the following day assumed charge of the Customs. The Saiyid professed his intention to respect the interests of the British Government, and an arrangement was come to with him in regard to customs revenue, by which, after subtraction of a certain sum for current Nationalist expenses, the balance was to be held in trust by certain "trustworthy" Persian merchants. But the Saiyid succeeded in undermining the honesty of these persons, and appropriated all the money on deposit. The result was that pending the conclusion of an entirely satisfactory arrangement with the responsible Nationalist leaders, the customs receipts were retained on the Customs premises in the possession of the Belgian officials ; and His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire was authorized to use the presence of bluejackets from H. M. S. *Fox* at the Custom house in order to prevent the Saiyid from making any further seizure. Subsequently a temporary arrangement was come to whereby the Bushire customs receipts were to be paid into the account of the Director of Customs at the Imperial Bank ; and the Bank's consent was to be obtained before the withdrawal of any of this money. Further, the Persian Government were warned that if the arrears due to the Imperial Bank of Persia, and the monthly instalment on account of interest on the British loan, were not treated as a first charge on the customs receipts, the consequences for the Persian Government would be disagreeable.

In June it was reported that normal arrangements had been restored in the customs at Bushire, and that the temporary impounding of the receipts by the Bank had ceased. During the time the expedient was in force, the receipts were very low, owing partly to the uncertainty of the situation and partly to the insecurity of the road ; and after paying the expenses of the customs administration and a small daily allowance to the governor to enable him to maintain order, a balance

of only 12,000 tomans remained, which was remitted to the Imperial Bank as part of the interest on their advances to the Persian Government.

Early in July His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire was informed by the local assembly of the Nationalist party that pending the present unsettled state of affairs and the establishment of a constitutional Government at Tehran, they were intent on preventing the Shah from getting the local customs revenue ; and he was accordingly authorised to accept their suggestion that the entire net receipts of the Bushire customs should be paid into, and retained at, the Imperial Bank, provided he could ensure that no part of the sums thus deposited, would be improperly withdrawn.

About a year later—*viz.*, the 26th May 1910—an Agreement was concluded for the amalgamation and liquidation of the debts due by the Persian Government to the Imperial Bank of Persia, and for the service and amortization of the Anglo-Indian sterling loan of 1903-04. The Agreement did not settle all the questions at issue between the Bank and the Persian Government, for it left claims still outstanding against the latter amounting in all to Krans 1,942,323. Little difficulty was apprehended by the Bank as to the settlement of these claims.

The Agreement is printed as Appendix VI.

To return to the question of a joint-loan to Persia by Great Britain and Russia, M. Bizot, a French financial expert, had arrived in Tehran in the spring of 1908 as a Financial Adviser to the Persian Government. He soon reported that the Persian Government were in the greatest straits for money, and that an advance similar to that contemplated by Great Britain and Russia in 1906 was necessary, but that, in order to secure its proper employment, it would be necessary to attach very stringent conditions, as otherwise it would be embezzled by the Shah's entourage. He thought, however, that the need was so urgent that the Shah and his Ministers would consent to any terms.

In December 1908, the Shah inquired from the British and Russian Representatives at his Court, whether the two Governments would be prepared to make an advance of £400,000, if a constitution were granted ; and was informed in reply that it would be essential that the constitution should not only be granted, but that it should actually be put in force, and that sufficient guarantees should be given that the money would be put to proper uses. The British and Russian Governments, as already related, were at this time—*i.e.*, early in 1909—considering plans for joint action, with a view of helping the Shah to institute reforms, and terminate the present deplorable situation in the country ; and on the 22nd April 1909 they presented to the Shah a joint memorandum, which, provided certain specified reforms were undertaken and a constitutional *régime* re-established, held out hopes of an immediate advance from Russia of £100,000 ; to be followed by a similar advance from Great Britain, if considered necessary ; and also, perhaps, under certain guarantees, by a larger joint-loan from the two Powers.

On the 11th May 1909, the Secretary of State telegraphed that subject to the fulfilment by the Shah of the conditions imposed and to safeguards on the proper expenditure of funds, His Majesty's Government were pledged to contribute to the moiety of the joint advance by the two Governments to enable the Shah to meet urgent claims, the discharge of which was necessary to secure his position on the establishment of the new *régime*. In accordance with the agreement arrived at with the Russian Government in October 1906 which had been treated as holding good in principle throughout the subsequent phases of the negotiations with Russia, the total amount of the joint advance was not to exceed four hundred thousand pounds in all. The conditions which made that agreement necessary applied with equal force now, and in the circumstances the Government of India must accept financial responsibility for one hundred thousand pounds, being a moiety of the British share of the joint advance ; India was, however, free from any engagement as regards any further financial assistance to Persia. It had been made clear to the Foreign Office that, apart from objections, on the grounds of general Imperial policy, to financial and other entanglements in Persia, Lord Morley could not admit that Indian interests in Persia were of a nature to justify expenditure from Indian

revenues on schemes for establishing a reformed Government in Persia. Schemes of this nature involved not only financial risk, but danger of international complications, and it was essential logically that India should be kept entirely free from responsibility with regard to the latter.

The Shah accepted the conditions as to the Constitution, but there was delay in actually providing him with money. The Russian Government were taking time over the preparation of the actual contract-form; while Great Britain would not advance any part of the share of the loan, until an Assembly met and sanctioned it. Eventually in July a hint was conveyed to Sir G. Barclay that money was urgently wanted, and the Imperial Bank of Persia was asked for a loan of £100,000. Sir E. Grey instructed (August 26) His Majesty's Representative at St. Petersburg to represent to the Russian Government the desirability of making an advance, as in their present financial straits, and without Anglo-Russian help, the Persian Government might be driven to apply for a loan elsewhere. If the Russian Government would authorise a similar advance, His Majesty's Government would be prepared to authorize the Imperial Bank to advance £50,000, subject only to the understanding that the advance would be ratified subsequently by the Medjliss and that expenditure should be properly supervised.

But the Persian Government did not want supervision over their expenditure; while Russia in the meantime seemed to have changed her mind and to be now decidedly indisposed to lend money to Persia. Anyway nothing was arranged; and for the next two months the Persian Government was engaged in trying to raise a loan from the Imperial Bank of Persia on the security of the crown jewels. But their efforts came to nothing. His Majesty's Government had encouraged the proposal, and enlisted the co-operation of Russia; who, however, would only share in the advance suggested of 400,000 tomans, on terms which the Persian Government found it impossible to accept, and which included a demand for a concession of the navigation rights on Lake Urumia.

In December 1909, the old proposal of a joint-loan to Persia by the two Governments—which, having hung fire since 1906, had been revived by the Shah a year ago—now again came to the fore. On the 2nd of the month Sir G. Barclay reported that a programme had been presented by the Cabinet to the Medjliss for discussion, and that it included a proposal to apply for a loan of 2,500,000 tomans and foreshadowed an application for a large loan at a later date in order to consolidate advances now carrying exorbitant interest. The customs revenue of the country, as at present charged, would not, he thought, bear further borrowing, but he hoped that this would not, in itself, deter the two Governments from making a joint advance in view of (1) the urgent need of the Persian Government; (2) the possibility of substantially reducing the charges on the customs by consolidating the advances of the two banks, (3) the likelihood of a considerably increased customs revenue if things went right; (4) the certainty of finding means in Persia to recoup His Majesty's Government if things went wrong. He suggested tentatively, subject to modifications and developments as the negotiations proceeded, the following conditions which should be attached to an advance:—

- (a) Approval by the two Powers of the budget of the expenditure of the money lent, and the supervision of its execution by an approved committee including M. Bizot, the French financial adviser.
- (b) The budget to be approved only if position be made for the institution of an efficient gendarmerie with a number of European instructors.
- (c) Reorganization of the Financial Administration with the help of five or six employés of French nationality.
- (d) Ear-marking of Railways in general terms.

Sir G. Barclay observed that there was no hope of assuring the stability of the present *régime* without a substantial advance, and he trusted that in any case the conditions imposed would not be such as to wreck the advance. He even thought that it might well prove better economy to make on advance to the Persian Government, without conditions.

On the 13th December the Persian Government approached the British and Russian Legations with a request for an advance of £500,000. The views of the

Persian Ministers as to control of expenditure, the purposes for which the money was to be employed, security and the employment of foreign agents, could not be elicited in detail, but were generally to the following effect. The Persian Government could offer no security at present, but hoped, by a considerable loan later on, to consolidate the floating debt at low interest and thus reduce the charges on the customs. The money would be utilised for the restoration of order, to which end the creation of a force of gendarmerie was essential. The Legations would be presented, as soon as it could be prepared, with a statement of expenditure and with a scheme of control, the latter to be supervised by M. Bizot under extended authority. Foreign advisers would be engaged where necessary. Sir G. Barclay considered that the Persian Government should be given the advance, as they seemed to be sincerely attempting to prepare a scheme of control and a proper budget; and the Russian Minister was in substantial agreement with him in regard to the four conditions proposed for the advance. He was informed (December 17) that His Majesty's Government were willing to advance £200,000, if the Russian Government made a similar contribution, but that some security would be essential.

His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg impressed on M. Isvolsky the necessity of supplying the Persian Government with funds, in order to avoid the necessity for intervention in Persian affairs which was threatening. But M. Isvolsky replied that, owing to the attitude of the Persian Government, his Government did not feel amicably disposed towards them.

On the 6th January the formal views of the Russian Government were communicated to Sir A. Nicolson. The Russian Government considered an advance of £400,000 insufficient, unless made in connection with a more considerable loan for the extinction or conversion of the floating debts. They held that the Persian Government could raise a loan of £300,000 if once freed from floating debts, and that the interest could be guaranteed by the surplus customs revenue. They pointed out that the conclusion of a large loan would alone give both Governments the right to institute effective financial control and thus ensure the solution of certain questions, such as preferential rights as regards railway concessions. They were willing to advance £100,000, their share of the advance on the loan, but it would be very difficult to get sanction to go beyond that sum. Finally, they thought that the control of expenditure should be confided to a special financial commission.

On the 31st January 1910, the Persian Chargé d'Affaires in London called on Sir E. Grey and stated that his Government were unable to understand why there was still a delay in making the small advance so urgently required, especially as the two Ministers had practically settled the conditions. He said that the Persian Government would like to be informed if the two Governments could not make the advance, so that they might try to raise the money from some other source. He was informed that the matters were being expedited to the utmost. The substance of this information was communicated to M. Isvolsky with a request for an early reply regarding Russian participation in the advance of £400,000.

The conditions of the advance as finally elaborated, and agreed to between the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran; the Russian Government's views thereon; and the discussion which ensued on the subject at Tehran between the Persian Government, and the British and Russian Ministers, are matters which are related in detail in Appendix III. It is enough here to state that while negotiations were still pending, information was received early in March 1910, that a company called the "International Oriental Syndicate, Limited," had offered to finance Messrs. Samuel and Company to make a loan to the Persian Government of £200,000 now and £300,000 later, on security of the mint profits, the receipts from posts and telegraphs and the entire interest of the Persian Government in the D'Arcy Oil Concession.

Thereupon the British and Russian Governments jointly warned (March 15) the Persian Government that they could not agree to the sources of public revenue being mortgaged to advances other than that under negotiation, so long as the Persian Government were in arrears in their payments to the British and Russian Governments and to the British and Russian Banks, and so long as the question

of the joint advance was under consideration. And in conveying this warning, the British and Russian Ministers asked the Persian Government for a reply to the proposed conditions for the Anglo-Russian advance.

The Persian Government replied on the 10th April 1910. They expressed surprise that conditions incompatible with Persian independence should have been suggested, and they declined to entertain any conditions save such as related to interest, sinking fund and security. The maintenance of order and financial reform were included in the ministerial programme and were already the first care of the Government. In regard to the warning conveyed to them relative to the pledging of Persian sources of revenue, they stated that the right of Persia to dispose of her available uncharged revenues could not be impaired by the negotiations for the joint advance. All arrangements with the two Powers would, however, be fully respected.

This communication from the Persian Government almost crossed one to them, dated April 7th, 1910, from the British and Russian Ministers, which contained the views of their Governments on the question of the loans which the Persian Government were desirous of securing from third parties. The substance of the note was that England and Russia had no objection to the conclusion of a loan elsewhere, provided that revenues from customs and other sources appropriated to the service of loans concluded in Russia and in England would not be utilised as securities for new loans in any case; that all financial obligations contracted by England and Russia in Persia would be incorporated in a regular engagement, which would determine a fixed annuity for interest and sinking fund, as also the revenues to be utilised as security; and that foreigners should not be given concessions by which the political or strategical interests of England and Russia might be adversely affected.

The Persian Government, in replying on the 7th May, accepted the financial conditions, but deferred a reply with regard to the matter of concessions.

During May the hostile attitude of the Persian Government towards an Anglo-Russian advance underwent a change, and by the end of the month the Government showed a disposition to accord a favourable reception to overtures on this matter. After an interview with Nasr-ul-Mulk, Mr. Marling recommended (23rd May 1910) that advantage should be taken of Persia's friendliness, and that, provided foreign financial advisers were engaged, the joint advance should be made without conditions, except to provide security for service thereof and for repayment in the event of a subsequent loan. His Majesty's Government had no objection to the appointment of French financial advisers and considered that the Persian Government should be met halfway and that the British share of the advance should be made without conditions if Russia agreed. They hoped that Russia would meet the Persian friendly advance with some encouragement. These views were conveyed on the 26th May to the Russian Government.

In consequence of these negotiations, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company suspended action on a project which they had meantime put forward, through Lord Strathcona, for making a loan of £400,000 to the Persian Government.

Mention may be made here of other schemes of this time for providing Persia with money.

In April 1910 the International Oriental Syndicate, already referred to above, inquired whether His Majesty's Government would give their unofficial consent to the resumption of negotiations for a loan to the Persian Government. The Syndicate stated that in two foreign countries, Germany not being one, financiers were ready to carry through the repayment of the British and Russian loans as well as the Bank debts and the consolidation of the Persian debt, and that they would be compelled to avail themselves of this foreign assistance if their negotiations were still opposed. They were willing to admit Russian participation in the transaction, but only privately owing to Persian suspicions.

During the same month an option for four months for a loan of Frs. 200,000,000 was given to M. Maurice Cohen, who was connected with several French financial firms, and the security offered was the customs and telegraph receipts; but Messrs. Cohen's group, were informed by the French Government that no official

recognition would be accorded to any project displeasing to the British and Russian Governments, and that quotation on the Bourse would be refused for any loan which the two Powers did not approve.

Messrs. Tumaniantz, of Baku, and an Anglo-American group also exhibited about this time a desire to approach the Persian Government with the object of making a loan.

On the 6th May, Mr. Marling reported that the Medjliss had decided to raise an internal loan of 5,000,000 tomans. The security was to be the revenues of State domains, and in order to secure public confidence a European "Administrator of public debts" was to be appointed. Later in the same month there was some correspondence between the Foreign Office and Messrs. Seligman Brothers in connection with the latter's desire to open negotiations for a loan to the Persian Government. The Foreign Office was unable to hold out any prospect of assistance or countenance to the firm, a member of which, Mr. Seligman, arrived in Tehran late in June, accompanied by Mr. Moore, who had been closely connected with the revolutionaries during the rebellion at Tabriz. Their object was to ascertain the prospects of making a considerable loan, and Mr. Marling considered that, if the Persian Government became aware of their object, the prospect of a successful joint advance by England and Russia would be very small. M. Poklewski also deprecated any operations by Mr. Seligman. Mr. Moore had called at the Foreign Office before leaving London, and had been informed that no support could be given to any application from Mr. Seligman. Mr. Moore had made no mention of the motive of his visit to Tehran and had promised not to inconvenience His Britannic Majesty's Legation. By the end of June he had, however, advised the Persian Government to apply to Messrs. Seligman Brothers. Sir E. Grey considered that no objection could be urged against a loan from this firm, provided that no securities were offered by Persia in which England and Russia were interested.

The Anglo-Persian Oil group renewed, at the end of June, their proposal to open negotiations for a loan to the Persian Government in connection with a mining concession sought by them near Kerman. Sir E. Grey had no objection to their approaching the Persian Government, provided that the Russian Government did not object on the score of Russian interests being prejudiced. The Russian Government gave their adherence to the project, on the condition that the debts to the Russian Bank should be converted before the advance was made, and that revenues on which Russian loans were guaranteed were not affected to the service of the proposed advance. The Russian Government assumed that the group referred to pursued no political aims and sought only mining concessions near Kerman and in the neutral zone.

With the consent of M. Poklewski Mr. Preece, representing the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, consequently approached the Persian Government, but was told by the Persian Minister of Finance that the terms offered were unacceptable. This reply was seemingly due to the overtures of Messrs. Seligman and of the International Syndicate.

To return to the subject of the proposed Anglo-Russian advance. At the close of the period under review, this project seemed no nearer a conclusion.

M. Isvolsky announced (June 15, 1910) that his Government accepted the proposal in principle, on condition that duty should be levied on imports of silver and that sufficient security was found to guarantee the repayment of the advance. Sir E. Grey, in connection with the latter point, agreed that, if the Persian Government applied for the advance, the whole customs revenue should be security for the whole advance, conditional on the accounts of the old and new advances being kept separate, and on none of the Southern Customs receipts being applied to its service till the Anglo-Indian loans and the Imperial Bank's debt had been fully discharged. He also agreed to British support being given to Russian opposition to the proposed duty-free import of silver into Persia, a proposal that would seriously diminish the Northern revenues. As Persia, however, had manifested a reluctance to ask for the advance in consequence of the tempting possibility of raising money from foreign financial groups, it was also agreed to diminish the rate of interest on the advance to 5 per cent. These decisions were communicated to the Russian Government by Mr. O'Beirne.



The further development of the matter concerns a period not comprised in this summary.

Meanwhile in connection with the conditions of the proposed joint Anglo-Russian advance of £400,000 to Persia, His Majesty's Government considered that it

**Railway concessions in Persia.** might be necessary to formulate a programme of railway concessions to be earmarked to Great Britain. These concessions were specified as being (1) the southern section of the line, Mohammerah-Julfa, the northern section of which Russia would apply for; (2) Bandar Abbas-Kerman; (3) Bandar Abbas-Ahwaz *viâ* Shiraz with option of a port on Khor Musa; (4) Bushire to a point on (3) *viâ* Aliabad; (5) Kerman-Robat; (6) Kerman to Charbar or Gwettar.

There was no probability of these lines being constructed in the near future, but the possibility of a third Power obtaining concessions which might threaten Indian political or strategical interests had to be guarded against.

The Government of India, whose views were invited, informed His Majesty's Government (3rd May 1910) that the security of the British position at the head of the Persian Gulf was of the greatest strategical importance. Consequently it would, in the first place, be necessary to arrange for the conversion into a definite concession of the option, which we now held, for the southern section of the Mohammerah-Julfa line up to the southern limit of the Russian sphere. The next step would be to obtain a concession or option for a specified line from a port on the Gulf to the plateau, through the neutral zone, in order to preclude the possibility of German enterprise. Items (3) and (4) were adapted for this purpose, and would increase British influence throughout Southern and Central Persia and consolidate our position on the eastern littoral of the Gulf. Last in importance would come all options or concessions within the British sphere, *i.e.*, Bunder Abbas-Kerman; Kerman-Robat; Kerman-Charbar or Gwettar. It would be desirable to secure these merely in order to prevent outside interference in the British sphere and not necessarily for construction.

If only blocking options were contemplated, the Government of India held that an option for Nos. (3) and (4) as one concession, would be of more immediate importance, for political reasons, than an option for (2). If, on the other hand, there should be any British syndicate ready immediately to undertake the Bandar Abbas-Kerman project, which was undoubtedly feasible, then the acquisition of a definite concession for that line would outweigh the political importance of obtaining a mere blocking option for the Bunder Abbas-Shiraz-Bushire scheme, the engineering feasibility of which was not assured. It would be desirable that all concessions should be for as long a time as possible.

The Anglo-Russian accord which, as will be gathered from what precedes, was so prominently to the fore from the very outset of Lord Minto's term of office, also left its mark on certain telegraph measures in Persia during the period 1905-10.

#### Telegraph measures.

It had been suggested by Russia in 1907 that as a corollary to the general agreement regarding Persia which was then under negotiation between the two Governments, the British Government should

(1) *Exchange of Nasratabad-Khaf and Meshed-Tehran lines.*

hand over the control of the Tehran-Meshed line, but that they should only receive control of the Meshed-Seistan line from a point to be determined hereafter in the neutral zone south of the Russian sphere, and that the adhesion of the Persian Government should be obtained before the arrangement came into force. The Russian argument was that, while it was proper that the sections of the Meshed-Seistan lines which were in the British sphere should be under British control, it would be improper that British control should be exercised in the Russian sphere of interest.

Just at this time the British Government proposed to try to obtain the consent of the Persian Government to a prolongation for twenty years, on their expiry in 1925, of the concessions of the telegraph lines from Tehran to Bushire, Jask to Gwadur, and Kuchan to Robat; and they felt it incumbent on them, in view of the negotiations which they were then conducting with Russia towards a

general settlement in regard to Persia, to inform the Russian Government of their intention. Provided the Russian Government adopted a friendly attitude towards the British proposal, His Majesty's Government were disposed to accept the above mentioned Russian suggestion for an exchange of telegraph lines. The Government of India strongly objected to the Russian proposal, on the ground that it would enable all British messages to Meshed to be tapped by the Russian officials.

Negotiations between Great Britain and Russia, however, proceeded in a friendly spirit; and on the 25th August 1907 His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg telegraphed home reporting the receipt of a memorandum from M. Isvolsky regarding the British proposal for the renewal of the Telegraph concessions till 1925. The Russian Government agreed in principle not to object to the renewal for twenty years of the Telegraph Concessions desired by Great Britain, in return for the surrender to Russia of British rights over the Tehran-Khanikin line.

A week later (August 31, 1907) the Anglo-Russian Convention with Russia was signed; and simultaneously Russia's proposal to concede to Great Britain the control of the Khaf-Seistan section of the Meshed-Seistan line, in return for the cession by Great Britain of her control over the Tehran-Meshed line, was accepted by the two Powers, and their agreement on the point recorded in a separate document (printed in full as Appendix IV), which was, however, not to be published until the consent of the Persian Government to the arrangement had been obtained.

The British and Russian Ministers at Telran were subsequently instructed by their respective Governments to concert with one another as to approaching the Persian Government and obtaining their consent as soon as possible to the exchange of the telegraph lines in question; but they were both agreed that the time was inopportune for the purpose as the National Assembly was still very sensitive about the Anglo-Russian Agreement; and accordingly no further steps were taken in the matter at the time. Some six months later (April 1908) His Majesty's Government proposed that, as the retention of British signallers at Tehran and Meshed, which had been suggested by the Government of India, would certainly lead to a demand for the retention of Russian signallers in Seistan and so tend to frustrate the objects aimed at by the exchange of lines, the men should be withdrawn, in order to secure the withdrawal of Russian signallers from the British zone. But the Russian Government demurred to this view and suggested instead that each Power should withdraw all its mechanicians and inspectors, but that Great Britain should retain her signallers at Tehran and Meshed, and Russia hers at Birjand and Nasratabad. His Majesty's Government agreed to this arrangement, and Sir A. Nicolson was furnished with a draft memorandum detailing the proposed exchange, which he was directed to communicate to the Russian Government. The draft, which is printed as Appendix V, was not to come into force until the consent of the Persian Government had been obtained to the principle of exchange; and in order to obtain this the British and Russian Governments agreed that the best way would be for their Ministers at Tehran to represent the transaction to the Persian Government as one to which the British and Russian Governments had agreed as a matter of convenience and economy, and not as a complement of the Anglo-Russian Convention.

But overtures to the Persian Government in the matter were delayed, because it was felt that anti-Russian feeling was so strong in the National Assembly that no Minister would dare to consent to the exchange; and on the 5th March 1909 His Majesty's Minister at St. Petersburg was instructed that, in the event of the Russian Government pressing for a speedy settlement of the exchange of control of the lines in question, he was to inform them that His Majesty's Government considered that the Persian Government would be more likely to waive their objections to this exchange if they had first been well disposed by the financial advantages which were likely to arise from the transfer to the British Government of control over the Arabistan lines.

This action was taken; and the Russian Government replied in a note dated the 29th May 1909. They thought the present time very opportune for effecting the exchange and hoped the British Minister at Tehran would be instructed to enter into an agreement on the necessary lines with the Russian Minister as soon as possible. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, however, intimated informally



that if His Majesty's Government wished to delay matters a little longer in order to put through their Arabistan arrangements and the extension of their concession to 1945, the Russian Government would offer no objection.

In view of this representation His Majesty's Government decided in June 1909 to say no more to the Russian Government in the matter, but to leave it to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to decide as to what would be the first favourable opportunity of raising the question with the Persian Government. Should the Russian Minister show any disposition to take any premature action in the matter His Majesty's Minister was, they said, to be trusted to make every effort to prevent it.

Up to the end of the period comprised in this summary the matter had not been broached to the Persian Government, nor the final exchange of the lines effected.

] The mention in the foregoing paragraphs of a suggestion to transfer to Great Britain the control over the Arabistan lines of telegraph had reference to some negotiations which Great Britain had been concurrently pursuing, and of which it will be convenient to insert an account here.

(2) *The Arabistan Convention.*

The question of the improvement of telegraphic communication with Ahwaz and Mohammerah had been brought to the notice of the Government of India in 1905, owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the existing line, as mismanaged by the Persian authorities. They had accordingly requested the views of His Majesty's Legation at Tehran on certain proposals put forward by the Political Resident, Bushire, for taking over the Ahwaz-Mohammerah line and connecting up Ahwaz and Mohammerah with Fao by a cable, by wireless telegraphy, or by a boat service across the Shatt-el-Arab. An alternative proposal was to take over the Borasjun-Ahwaz section, extend it to Malamir certainly and to Ispahan, if possible. In November 1905, Mr. Grant Duff replied that the most practicable scheme and also the one calculated to raise the least opposition on the part of the Persian Government was for His Majesty's Government to take over the line and continue it to a point opposite Fao. Communication between the Fao office and that on the opposite bank was essentially a technical question, as the Persian Government would not presumably object to a cable more than to wireless telegraphy; but communication by boat service was certainly open to objection. At the same time he warned the Government of India that any proposal to effect reform of any kind in Persia would be opposed by the Shah and the Grand Vizier whose idea of government was to prevent the increase of foreign influence in Persia. The matter was not further pursued at the time owing to the negotiations regarding the Henjam-Bandar Abbas cable and the Telegraph Concession in Henjam. It was revived, however, in March 1907 by Major Cox, the Political Resident, Bushire, who feared that the Ahwaz-Borasjun line, which traversed a tract of much importance to Indian interests, would never work satisfactorily unless it were taken over by the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

At this time, i.e., in the spring of 1907, as already related, Great Britain was contemplating an application to the Persian Government for an extension of the Telegraph Conventions till 1925; and the Government of India accordingly suggested to His Majesty's Government that the question of taking over the Ahwaz-Borasjun line by the Indo-European Telegraph Department might conveniently be included in any negotiations that might be opened with the Persian Government on the subject of the renewal of the Telegraph Conventions. But His Majesty's Government were of opinion that it would be useless to suggest the transfer proposed in the present temper of the Persian National Assembly. His Majesty's Representative at Tehran, however, thought differently, and recommended that the present moment, when the situation in Bakhtiaristan was so critical, might be taken to bring sufficient pressure to bear upon the Persian Government to induce them to permit the line to be repaired and maintained by the Indo-European Telegraph Department. On this His Majesty's Government decided, in view of the importance of preventing the line from passing into other hands, to approach the Persian Government in the matter, and try to obtain the control of the whole line, Borasjun-Ahwaz-Mohammerah; the expense involved being shared between Imperial and Indian revenues.

Negotiations to this end were, with the sanction of His Majesty's Government, eventually opened directly between the Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department and the Persian Minister of Telegraphs, and an agreement in principle for the control of the line was reached in December 1908. Subsequently the Russian Government, who were fully informed by His Majesty's Government of the action taken by them and of the extent of their proposals, agreed (January 1909) to an arrangement whereby the Indo-European Telegraph Department would, on receipt from the Persian Minister of Telegraphs of the proposal to take over control of the reconstruction and maintenance of the line, be prepared to accept it, and, on condition that the Persian Telegraph Department should undertake to secure an extension of the Telegraph Concessions till 1945, would in the first instance offer, in return, to reconstruct the line at a cost of some £6,000 on behalf of the Persian Telegraph Department and to spend some £ 600 a year in maintaining it subsequently. Should it prove necessary, in order to secure the extension of the Telegraph Concessions, the Indo-European Telegraph Department would further be prepared to offer to advance the Persian Telegraph Department a lump sum not exceeding £10,000, being ten years' rental of the Central Persian telegraph line.

His Majesty's Minister at Tehran was accordingly requested to endeavour to get an agreement concluded with the Persian Government on these lines; and in May 1909 he reported that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs was now ready to sign a Convention very much on the lines desired, provided it was agreed by an exchange of Notes that the Convention should not come into force until approved by the Persian National Assembly; and Russia, after some discussion of the matter, agreed to the immediate signature of the Convention without alteration, provided that it were supplemented by a secret Anglo-Russian agreement containing a clause to the effect that should Russia desire at any time to employ signallers on the Arabistan lines, such signallers should be considered as employés of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and should be attached to that Department; her object being to ensure, in the event of the development of her trade in those regions, the efficient transmission of Russian messages. These terms were agreed to by Great Britain.

The Arabistan Convention was signed on the 17th June 1909. Its full text is given as Appendix II. Its chief provisions were that the telegraph lines between Borasjun and Mohammerah, and Borasjun and Dizful, should from the date of the Convention until 1945 be under the control and supervision of the British Government telegraph officials, that the British Government could in case of necessity, and with the permission of the Persian Government, join these lines at their eastern extremity, to the line between Tehran and Bushire.; that the Persian Government agreed to consider the Telegraph Conventions of April 2, 1868, December 2, 1872, and August 16, 1901, respectively to be in force, and binding up to the 1st January 1945; that the Persian Government undertook not to employ on the Arabistan lines, without the concurrence of the chiefs of the British Telegraph Department, anyone except Persian subjects or members of the British Telegraph Department; and that should the Persian Government wish to extend the Arabistan lines in any direction in future, the co-operation of the Indo-European Telegraph Department should be asked for.

The Convention was not to be binding until approved by the Persian National Assembly.

It was subsequently reported that it was feared the Medjliss, would refuse to ratify the Convention, owing mainly to its distrust of the Article renewing the Telegraph Concessions; and it was accordingly decided to persuade the Medjliss, if possible, to adopt a different attitude by offering the following inducements, viz:—

- (1) the non-exercise of British rights to put forward claims for acts of ordinary damage to the Department's lines in Persia; and
- (2) to advance a sum not exceeding £10,000 against the next ten years' minimum rental of the Central Persia line.

His Majesty's Government considered that, apart from the renewal of the Telegraph concessions, the Convention was valuable, and, if in spite of the further

inducements offered, it should prove to be unacceptable in its present form, an alternative Convention relating to the Arabistan lines and omitting mention of the renewal of concessions should be presented to the Medjliss.

It was eventually left to Sir G. Barclay's discretion to do the best he could in the matter, on the lines stated.

A third important measure of the period under review, in connection with telegraphs in Persia, was the doubling of the Tehran-Shahrud line. Under instructions from home, His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg informed the Russian Government in January 1909, that, in connection with the negotiations respecting the Arabistan lines, the opportunity was to be taken to erect, at the request of the Persian Government, a second wire from Tehran to Shahrud. It was pointed out to the Russian Government that, as regards the proposed second Tehran-Shahrud line, in view of the impending transfer to Russia of control over the Tehran-Meshed line and of the fact that the line was within the Russian sphere, the British Government wished this proposal to remain in abeyance until the transfer had been effected, when the Russian Government would be able to consider whether they would wish to erect the second wire.

On the 9th March 1909, His Majesty's Minister at Tehran suggested that, if the construction of a second line to Shahrud was pressed for by the Persian Minister of Telegraphs, it would be well that authority should be given to the Indo-European Telegraph Department to undertake the preliminary work (which might be abandoned by degrees when the telegraph negotiations were completed), as the negotiations, which were being hastened as much as possible in Persia, might be jeopardized by a direct refusal. On the 17th March, Sir A. Nicolson was instructed to explain the situation to the Russian Government, and to ask them if they wished the preliminary work to be undertaken by the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

Sir G. Barclay informed His Majesty's Government on the 14th August that the Persian Government were pressing the Indo-European Telegraph Department to erect the Shahrud wire, and that the Department could no longer postpone replying without giving offence. If the request were refused, reasons must be given, while if the question of the exchange of telegraphs were mentioned, it would be sure to prejudice the Assembly against the Arabistan Convention. If, on the other hand, the Russian Government were informed that His Majesty's Government intended to meet the wishes of the Persian Government, they would probably again raise the question of the exchange of telegraphs. The British Minister thought it would be well, irrespective of the Arabistan Convention, to postpone the question of exchange until feeling in Persia towards Russia was better disposed.

His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg was accordingly instructed to inform the Russian Government that it was proposed at once to undertake the erection of the wire; and further that, in Sir G. Barclay's opinion, the moment was inopportune for opening with the Persian Government the question of the exchange of telegraph lines between Great Britain and Russia, owing to the present state of public feeling in Persia in respect of the presence there of foreign troops. Sir A. Nicolson replied that work on the second line could be commenced at once by the Indo-European Telegraph Department, as the Russian Government had no objection whatever to its being erected.

The second wire from Shahrud was completed into Tehran on the 18th December 1909. It was used for traffic on the same date, and is working well.

Under the chapter relating to Seistan will be found an account of the negotiations with the Persian Government regarding the extension of the telegraph line from Robat (Koh-i-Malik Siah) at the end of the Indian system to Nasratabad, the southern terminus of the Meshed-Seistan line.

So much for the effect of Anglo-Russian accord on certain telegraph measures

**Turco-Persian frontier dispute.**

of the period under review. It also was displayed usefully in a boundary dispute on the Turco-Persian frontier. The indeterminate frontier between Turkey and Persia and between Mount Ararat and the Shatt-el-Arab, a distance of 700 miles, had been a source of constant bickerings between those powers; and the efforts of successive commissions had proved ineffectual in compromising the rival claims. The dispute again came prominently into notice in October 1905, just before Lord Minto landed in India; though how it came to be revived is somewhat difficult to establish. The Persian Customs Department under M. Naus may have been responsible for certain aggressions upon debatable land, but the balance of evidence tends to show that the personal ambition of local Ottoman officials was the primary cause of the occupation of those places and the subsequent encroachments of the Turks. At the end of October 1905 the Persian Government brought the matter to the notice of the British Legation at Tehran and requested that His Majesty's Government might be informed, in order that the British Embassy at Constantinople might be instructed to assist the Persian Ambassador at Constantinople. The Persian Ambassador in London represented matters to Lord Lansdowne, who concurred in the opinion of His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople not to intervene in the matter unless his Persian colleague approached him with a definite request for his good offices and was able to make out a fair case in support of the claim advanced by the Persian Government to the territory in dispute. Subsequently it was reported that the Porte had refused to withdraw its troops from the disputed territory, but agreed to appoint a member of a mixed commission, and that the Persian Government were ready to accept the arrangement, provided the Turkish troops were first withdrawn. His Majesty's Government considered that it would be better if Persia accepted the proposed arrangements without stipulating for the withdrawal of Turkish troops and His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, was instructed to advise the Persian Government accordingly. The Persian Government at first refused to consent to the formation of a mixed commission until the districts in dispute had been evacuated by the Ottoman troops and matters were thus brought to a deadlock, which continued for some time, both Governments enlivening this period by various acts of oppression and movements of troops to and from the frontier. This state of affairs continued, and there appeared to be no prospect of a definite settlement being arrived at, notwithstanding numerous representations made to both Governments by the British and Russian Ministers and Ambassadors at Tehran and Constantinople, respectively, until May 1906 when a Persian Commission was appointed and left Tehran for the frontier to enquire into the dispute.

Meanwhile Turkish troops occupied the districts of Dasht and Mergaver, and reinforced the garrisons in the neighbourhood of Urumia and Mendeli. This situation caused the Russian Government to approach His Majesty's Government on the subject; with the result that the British and Russian Representatives at Constantinople were instructed to co-operate in making representations to the Porte against Turkey's aggressive attitude and military concentration. His Majesty's Minister at Tehran was also directed to co-operate with the Russian Minister in pressing the Persian Government to maintain a prudent attitude.

At length at the end of July 1906 the Frontier Commissioners met, but no agreement was reached; Anglo-Russian efforts in response to Persian appeal had therefore been ineffectual.

The Turks continued their aggressions; laid claim to a line reaching at one point to lake Urumia and including Passova and threatened to break off negotiations. The Persian Government, alarmed at the situation and disappointed at the failure of their appeal for help to England and Russia, hinted, 10 days before the arrival of the German Minister, who was known to be interesting himself, at being compelled to have recourse to an arbitrator other than Great Britain or Russia, by which it was understood that he meant to have recourse to Germany, who could base her interference on Article 18 of her treaty with Persia of 1873 and thus obtain an opening for materially strengthening her position in Persia.

The Russian Government meanwhile received information that the frontier dispute was becoming serious and in view of the direct interests of Great Britain and Russia in Persia instructed Count Benckendorff to suggest that the eventuality above foreshadowed should be frustrated by joint action on the appeal made to them by Persia for submission of the case to arbitration—a right which both powers were unquestionably justified in exercising based as it was on the treaty of Erzeroum of 1847 and on their participation in the frontier delimitations of 1848-69 and 1878.

Ultimately after some further discussion of the matter between the British and Russian Governments, their Representatives at Constantinople sent to the Porte an identic communication in which they expressed the willingness of their Governments to use their good offices to bring about a settlement of the question and to nominate Commissioners who, in conjunction with the representative of the Mussalman Powers, should define the frontier line. The Porte admitted the principle that recourse to the mediation of England and Russia was the natural solution. When the Commissioners met, the Turkish Commission demanded the Lahan frontier. The Persian Government refused this, and a counter-proposal was made on 21st November 1906, which was that the Kandil Dagħ should be the frontier. This was rejected by the Porte as it would give Vazne and the command of the Vazne defile to Persia. Finally the Ottoman Government agreed to the appointment of a mixed commission. In January 1908 this Commission met at Urumia, but no compromise was possible, and the negotiations were soon at a deadlock. Then came the Turkish revolution; and there is little further to notice in connection with the dispute, until June 1909 when Turkish troops were sent to Urumia and pushed up to the frontier from Van. This movement perturbed the Russian Government, and as a result of a joint representation by His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government the Porte declared it had no designs of territorial aggrandisement and no intention of doing more than protect its subjects. In January 1910 further Anglo-Russian representations were made to the Porte against the occupation by Turkish troops of certain points outside the neutral zone as laid down in the identic map of 1869, and undoubtedly in Persian territory. This action was followed by reports of renewed occupations of Persian territory, by Turkish troops; and of the levy by them of customs and taxes in Urumia and elsewhere; and the British and Russian Ambassadors accordingly made joint inquiry of the Turkish Government as to the truth of these reports. The Turkish Foreign Minister's reply admitted the temporary presence in Urumia and neighbourhood of Turkish officials and troops whose distribution and movements were insufficiently known; and the British and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople accordingly decided to make a joint proposal to the Porte that Turkey should join their Governments in sending an official in order to ascertain the exact situation in Azerbaijan, where the Persian administrative authority was temporarily weakened. This action was duly taken, but up to the end of June no reply had been received from the Turkish Government.

The Anglo-Russian *entente* was also reflected in another case, which, though belonging geographically to the Persian Gulf region, really concerns the general interests of Great Britain in Persia; so the matter may appropriately be dealt with here.

#### Karun Irrigation Project.

In October 1906, it was reported that the Persian Government were willing to grant the Karun irrigation concession to German financiers. Previous to this, however, and in connection with the negotiations for the proposed joint loan to Persia, and the rumours of a projected German loan, the Government of India had suggested to the Secretary of State (23rd September 1906) that, as it would be most prejudicial to British interests to permit the intrusion of foreign influence into the Karun and Khor Musa regions, any concession for irrigation on the Karun river should be secured by British enterprise. 400 square miles was the irrigable area on the left bank of the Karun river, of which 160,000 acres would be irrigated yearly, and the probable cost of the whole scheme would be about 150 lakhs.

His Majesty's Government, however, considered (October 8, 1906) that in the present position of their negotiations with Russia towards a general settle-

ment in regard to Persia, it would not be practicable to make any overtures to the Persian Government otherwise than in agreement with the Russian Government, and that to approach the Russian Government in the matter would be inadvisable.

The Netherlands Minister at Tehran had already spoken to His Majesty's Minister regarding the formation of an international company under Dutch direction for the exploitation of the Karun district; and he now asked for an expression of the views of His Majesty's Government on the proposal. On condition that England did not participate, he had, he said, the consent of Russia. With the Secretary of State's approval, Sir C. Spring-Rice replied that the Dutch Government should address their inquiries to His Majesty's Government in London; and also informed the Persian Government that His Majesty's Government assumed that no definite step would be taken in the matter without their being consulted.

The British Resident in the Gulf had represented that interference with their lands on the Karun by an International Company would be strongly resented by the Arabs, and that the Shaikh of Mohammerah was desirous of obtaining a concession in his own name with liberty to take foreign partners; and the Government of India now (October 26) suggested to His Majesty's Government that if they were not prepared to ask for a concession themselves, they might consider the Shaikh's proposal as a means of preventing the serious danger of the Karun tracts passing under foreign control, other than that of Great Britain or of some Power in close *entente* with her. But His Majesty's Government replied (October 31) that they held to the views they had already expressed in the matter.

The Shaikh of Mohammerah's objection to foreign interference in the Karun region was now made known at Tehran. Sir C. Spring-Rice telegraphed on the 3rd November 1906, stating he had been informed by the Muin-ut-Tujjar on behalf of the Shaikh of Mohammerah that the latter was opposed to any foreign concession or to foreign financial help, but would like to form a purely Persian Company and to engage a foreign expert as adviser. The Muin had inquired if the Government of India would lend Major Morton, and assured the Minister that the Arabs would never permit foreign interference with their lands, and that the Persian Government were aware that such was the case.

But the Dutch Minister at Tehran was not discouraged. He again urged the advantage of his scheme for the formation of an International Company to carry out the irrigation scheme. He said his scheme was favoured by the Shaikh of Mohammerah and Persian Government, and that the concession for which the Germans were pressing would be barred by his scheme. The British Minister informed him that application should be made in London as he had received no instructions. Acting on this hint, the Dutch Minister in London approached Sir E. Grey in December 1906, but his representations met with a cold reception, and early in January 1907 Sir E. Grey informed him that, as the political situation in Persia was so unsettled and the moment inopportune for encouraging foreign concessions, the question of the Karun irrigation could not at present be entertained.

In February 1907, M. de Sturler again approached His Majesty's Minister, Tehran. He had, he said, certain information that the German Legation was secretly working to obtain the concession for a purely German group intimately connected with the Baghdad Railway enterprise, and the only method of thwarting German design was for His Majesty's Government to give its support to the Dutch project. The Russian Legation, he said, concurred in this view.

Sir C. Spring-Rice, in reporting this information, also took the same view; and on the 1st March the Secretary of State telegraphed that His Majesty's Government proposed to approve the International scheme. The Government of India replied that they would have preferred to have supported the Shaikh of Mohammerah in obtaining the concession, but that if this was granted to an international syndicate, they trusted that measures would be taken to ensure that British capital should be fully interested and that the works should be carried out mainly by British irrigation engineers. The experience of the latter in such matters would, it was considered, justify their employment, even if political considerations were



not to count. It was presumed that full consideration had been paid to the possibility of opposition by the Shaikh of Mohammerah to the grant of the concession to a foreign syndicate.

Thereupon His Majesty's Minister at Tehran was asked to ascertain whether the Shaikh had advanced any claim for a concession from the Persian Government. If so, the Minister was instructed to suggest to the Persian Government that the Shaikh's views should be considered and his position recognised, and that should a concession be eventually granted to an international syndicate, His Majesty's Government would desire to be informed of the details of the scheme.

The Shaikh about this time told the British Resident in the Gulf that he wished to be kept posted as to what was passing in regard to the scheme, and as to the attitude of the British Government towards it. Personally, he said, he would much prefer that conditions in his territory should remain as they were except for the amount of irrigation he might be able to carry out on the banks of the river by means of machine pumps, with which he was experimenting; but that if a comprehensive irrigation scheme was inevitable, he wished to manage it himself under British guidance and with British co-operation, and would oppose the acquisition of a concession by any foreign or Persian syndicate.

His Majesty's Minister promised to keep the Shaikh informed in connection with the scheme, and added that the Netherlands Minister had intimated that he had no news of the formation of a company, but that if one were formed he would recommend direct dealings with the Shaikh.

The Netherlands Minister had further intimated that he had received an assurance from the German Minister that there was no intention to ask for the Ahwaz concession for a German firm.

Here the matter rested for nearly two years.

In January 1909 His Majesty's Minister at Tehran received information that a Dutch syndicate had obtained a concession for an irrigation scheme in the Karun valley. In reply to an enquiry on the point, the Minister for Foreign Affairs handed Sir G. Barclay a copy of a document granting M. de Sturler, late Netherlands Minister, Tehran (who was at the time in Europe), a two years' option from the 10th January for a "concession d'exploitation à l'Ahwaz." Sir G. Barclay promptly reminded the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the previous intimation from the British Legation to the effect that His Majesty's Government were confident that no definite step would be taken without previous communication to them.

He was also directed to inform the Persian Government that as they had disregarded the terms of Sir C. Spring-Rice's note, His Majesty's Government reserved their right to take objection to the scheme. The Political Resident at Bushire was also instructed to inform the Shaikh of Mohammerah of what was passing, to sound him as to his views, and to keep in touch with him. The Political Resident had, however, after consulting Sir G. Barclay, already, on the 31st December 1908, informed the Shaikh that there had been no further developments of the Karun irrigation question. The Shaikh had repeated his apprehensions, and begged Major Cox to reiterate and press on his behalf his former request for a loan for the purpose of financing a not too ambitious irrigation scheme himself, to be worked for him by a suitable British syndicate. The Shaikh was very much in earnest and asked for a telegraphic reply. Major Cox apprehended that it would be a serious shock to the Shaikh to hear the news of the present concession, as he had from the first left himself entirely in the hands of the British Government and relied on them to look after his interests.

In communicating the foregoing particulars to His Majesty's Government, the Government of India observed that they regarded the situation with anxiety: that, if given a free hand or supported, the Shaikh could probably make any work by the concessionaire impossible; and that they would like to suggest that Major Cox should go to Mohammerah to discuss the situation with the Shaikh and reassure him. He could, however do nothing unless fully informed as to the nature and scope of the concession and the result of the objection which had been lodged by His Majesty's Government. It was also necessary to know whether the concession referred to could even now be cancelled or neutralised by a counter-concession.

Meanwhile, the Persian Government, in reply to Sir G. Barclay's note, stated that, should a company be formed and a concession be granted under the option, the British Government would have the right to object to anything contrary to their interests, and that they (the Persian Government) would take suitable measures for the removal of such objections. British interests being identical with those of the Shaikh, Sir G. Barclay presumed that, if the Shaikh's interests could be effectively safeguarded, there would be no objection to the British Government continuing to maintain a neutral attitude. He also pointed out that, in the absence of a Dutch representative, he was unable to discover how the matter was likely to develop. He had private information that something more definite than a mere option had been granted, and suggested that it might be well for His Majesty's Government to remind the Netherlands Government of the conditions on which it had been agreed to remain neutral in the matter.

In accordance with Sir G. Barclay's instructions His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah interviewed the Shaikh, whose views were briefly as follows :—

That it would be preferable that the Ahwaz scheme should not be carried out, and that, in any case, he alone had the right to do it; that, if it were attempted, it would be prevented by the Arab cultivators unless the Shaikh held the concession himself and influenced them, but that any attempt at coercing them would be disastrous; that, if promised British capital to work it, he himself could take up the concession, and that he looked for guidance in the matter to the British Legation. He desired to telegraph to the Persian Government that rumours of a foreign irrigation concession were disturbing the Arabs, who would not agree to it, and to warn the Government of the danger of granting any such concession. The Shaikh was informed that Sir G. Barclay considered that, as the prospects of a concession being granted seemed still to be remote, he would act wisely in refraining for the present from making the proposed communication to the Persian Government and that he was consulting His Majesty's Government as to what steps should be taken to safeguard the Shaikh's interests.

Sir E. Grey reminded the Netherlands Government that no scheme, which was not viewed favourably by the Shaikh of Mohammerah, or which was in any way prejudicial to British interests, could be supported by His Majesty's Government, and enquired the scope and nature of the reported negotiations.

Meanwhile a report was received from His Majesty's Consul at Ahwaz to the effect that M. Van Roggen, the Dutch engineer, had written from The Hague to M. Ter Meulen of the Dutch firm of that name at Ahwaz, asserting that, on the 11th January, news of the signature of a concession for 99 years for a syndicate which must be formed within two years, was received at The Hague by the late Netherlands Minister, and that he had been promised all help by the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs. M. Ter Meulen had been requested by M. Van Roggen to visit the Shaikh and inform him quietly that the concession had been granted with the approval of the British, Russian and German Governments, and that he could not treat it lightly. His claims would be recognised by payment in cash and shares. His Majesty's Consul was directed to explain to M. Ter Meulen that His Majesty's Government were addressing a note to the Dutch Legation, enquiring the nature and scope of the negotiations which were reported to be on foot and reminding them that no scheme which in any way prejudiced the interests of His Majesty's Government, or was viewed unfavourably by the Shaikh, could receive their support. Until the situation was clear, His Majesty's Consul was to do all he could to dissuade M. Ter Meulen from approaching the Shaikh, and was to tell the Shaikh that he should pay no attention if M. Ter Meulen approached him.

In reply to Sir E. Grey's note, the Netherlands Government emphasised the undefined and vague character of the option granted to their late Minister at Tehran for a "concession d'exploitation à l'Ahwaz," adding that, if the Persian Government were to grant a concession for works near the Karun river to a Dutch syndicate the Netherlands Government would give such a syndicate timely warning that no work could be undertaken without the co-operation of the Shaikh of Mohammerah and the assured support of His Majesty's Government. This information was communicated to Major Cox, who after visiting Mohammerah reported that the Shaikh's apprehensions regarding the irrigation question, had for the present been allayed.



Subsequently, Major Cox reported to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that a written undertaking in the following sense had been given by the Shaikh:—

“(i) In view of past events, the Shaikh presumed that it would be necessary for him to obtain the assent of the Persian Government before he started on any scheme depending on the construction of the dam at Ahwaz. He stipulates that any concession which the Persian Government may grant shall be given in his own name, and that the British Government shall both help him in getting the concession and in refusing to agree to it being granted in any one else's name but his own, whether that of a Persian, a foreigner, or a British subject. The Shaikh, on his part, undertakes that for necessary expert assistance and funds for the carrying out of the work he will depend solely on the British, and that, both in the execution and working of the scheme, he will not allow either foreign subjects or foreign Governments to participate in any way whatever.

(ii) The Shaikh is of opinion that he could undertake minor projects which may be considered desirable, such as unpretentious schemes on the Karun, not depending on the building of a dam at Ahwaz; or minor irrigation schemes from the Kerkha, Jerahi, Sh ur, Hindiyan, or other rivers which flows through his territories, all of which would be profitable and useful, as ordinary items of tribal or domestic administration, and that reference to the Central Government would not be necessary. He engages that, in the contingency of any such scheme being undertaken by him, and if need should arise for the employment of outside help, financial or expert, the British shall have the option, and that he will employ such syndicate or persons as the British Government may put him in touch with, and that, until Great Britain has been asked for help and has refused it, no foreigners or foreign assistance will be employed.”

In regard to the minor schemes, Sir E. Grey considered that the Shaikh's offer might be accepted, as, otherwise, they might be given to foreigners. In regard to the main scheme it was decided to secure the assent of the Persian Government, especially now that the Shah had agreed to grant a Constitution, and that care must be taken not to create trouble between the Shaikh and the Persian Government. An opportunity should, if possible, be created to secure the concession for the Shaikh, as in this way we should both expose ourselves less to Dutch criticism and avoid difficulties with the Medjliss as regards concessions to foreigners. The question arose, however, as to whether it was advisable entirely to exclude foreign capital, as the necessity of compounding with the Dutch concessionaire was a contingency which could not entirely be overlooked. Sir G. Barclay replied that, as regards the Medjliss, he doubted if the proposal to secure the concession in the Shaikh's name would avoid difficulties, as the Karun irrigation question had been so much before the public and was thought to be so profitable that great opposition and the closest scrutiny might be expected when the Shaikh applied for the concession. As regards the exclusion of foreign capital, Sir G. Barclay considered this desirable, and expressed the opinion that Dutch claims to participation would presumably cease on the expiry of their option in January 1911, and that it was not improbable that the Medjliss would cancel it before then. This end might also be attained by the Shaikh protesting against the option when the Medjliss met and himself applying for the concession. Even if he were not successful, he would at least have first claim to be considered when the Dutch option did expire. In the event of it becoming necessary to compound with the Dutch concessionaire, Sir G. Barclay did not think it would be very difficult to induce the Shaikh to admit the required amount of Dutch capital under British auspices.

In view of the difficulties, which in Sir G. Barclay's opinion might arise in the way of giving effect to the Shaikh's proposals as they stood, and, as it might prove inconvenient hereafter to have given two definite pledges to the Shaikh, it was decided that he should merely be informed that the British Government had taken note of his assurances both as regards the minor schemes and also in regard to the scheme for the construction of the Ahwaz dam, and that, when a suitable opportunity presented itself, they would give him their approval and support in applying for a concession for the construction of the dam.

Meanwhile, on the 20th May, the Government of India forwarded to His Majesty's Government copies of reports containing Sir William Willcocks' views on the possibilities of irrigation in the Karun district of Ahwaz. In their opinion Sir William's view as to the potential wealth of the Karun valley confirmed the importance of the British Government retaining their present position of paramount influence with the Shaikh of Mohammerah, and of preventing him from

procuring from other than British sources the funds for its exploitation. They also drew attention to the view expressed by Sir William Willcocks as to the desirability of giving a scheme of irrigation from the Kerkha river preference over the Ahwaz scheme, in case the Shaikh decided to grant a concession to a British company in consideration for the loan of £5,000 or £6,000 which it was proposed to negotiate through the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

The Political Resident reported on the 24th June to His Majesty's Legation that, with the Shaikh's co-operation, Lieutenant Wilson had made preliminary reconnaissance and had furnished a full report of the Kerkha project, that the Shaikh was greatly attracted by the prospect of a simple and profitable scheme, and that he had invited Lieutenant Wilson to undertake a preliminary survey of the work. A copy of Lieutenant Wilson's report was sent to Sir William Willcocks who replied that the project seemed very easy and likely to prove remunerative. Sir William also gave instructions for certain preliminary work to be carried out by Lieutenant Wilson, and said that when this was completed he would visit the locality in October or November and then give his final opinion.

On the 30th December 1909, Sir William Willcocks arrived at Mohammerah and, in company with the Assistant Engineer, Public Works Department, Persian Gulf Sub-Division, proceeded to the Kerkha, and inspected the Kut Nahr Hashim and Sinn-el-Abbas cataracts on the river. His report is summarised as follows :—

Position of dam	..	..	..	Sinn-el-Abbas.
Cost of work	..	..	..	£75,000 at most.
Time required for execution of work	..	..	..	2 or 3 years.
Area irrigable	..	..	..	100,000 acres, hot and cold weather.
Probable revenue	..	..	..	£20,000.

Sir William stated that he was confident that the project, if carried out, would soon attract a permanent population, and that no serious difficulty would arise in this connection, for the very large population which now lived in the marshes would greatly prefer to live on the higher lands. He considered that the best site for a dam was at Sinn-el-Abbas.

Sir William Willcocks also interviewed the Shaikh of Mohammerah and discussed the scheme in some detail. Shaikh Khazal made no definite statement in regard thereto; he dwelt on the difficulty of inducing local Arabs to utilise irrigated land regularly, discussed the effect of the scheme on the Bani Truf, and, with regard to the financial question, stated that he looked to the British Government to assist him to find the necessary money for such a project. Sir William mentioned that, in Europe, capital might be obtained at 3 per cent. interest, plus half a share in the profits, but the Shaikh replied that he preferred to pay 6 per cent. and retain sole control.

Lieutenant Wilson discussed the question, from the point of view of the Bani Truf, with Shaikhs Matlab and Asi of that tribe, and reported that their former objections seemed to be considerably modified, and appeared to be capable of satisfactory adjustment. He, however, proposed to defer further discussion of the matter with the Shaikh of Mohammerah until the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf paid a visit to Mohammerah, when it might be possible to take some definite steps towards the realisation of the project to which Sir William Willcocks had devoted so much of his valuable time.

Meantime, on the 9th October 1909, His Majesty's Acting Consul at Mohammerah informed Sir G. Barclay that Razuki Bashuri, a rich Turkish Christian merchant, residing in Nasiri, had arranged to purchase two pumps of considerable power, and set them up near Wais, where he had obtained about 10 square miles of land on a ten years' lease from the Shaikh of Mohammerah on the sole condition that the Shaikh should have 75 per cent. of the crops grown thereon.

Lieutenant Wilson drew the attention of Razuki to the fact that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's pipe line crossed the area granted to him, and recommend-

ed him, before taking any definite steps towards the construction of canals, etc., to approach the Company's engineers through him in order that an arrangement satisfactory to both parties might be effected. Lieutenant Wilson was doubtful as to the success of the experiment, but as the prospects of success of further irrigation schemes in Arabistan would depend largely upon the impression created by this new venture, he asked the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to give Razuki such assistance as they reasonably could with regard to the transport of the pumps, contracts for oil, expert advice, etc., and this they promised to do.

Some other miscellaneous matters which were in the main the concern of the Imperial Government, may be fitly introduced here.

**D'Arcy Oil Syndicate.**

In 1901 a monopoly was granted to a Mr. D'Arcy for the working of the oil fields for a term of sixty years throughout the greater part of Persia, including Arabistan, where operations were soon commenced by a Syndicate bearing his name.

The concession attracted considerable attention in Russia. In September 1905 Mr. D'Arcy informed His Majesty's Government that he had entered into a working agreement with the Burma Oil Company in connection with his concession, and in November 1905 this newly formed Company concluded an agreement, through the agency of the British Consul-General at Ispahan, with the Bakhtiari Chiefs relative to the exploitation of naphtha in their territory. These Chiefs claimed that their consent was necessary before the Company could engage in operations on property held by the tribe. The Company desirous to avoid delays and complications did not dispute this claim, and settled the matter with the Khans. The Company was to pay the four Bakhtiari Khans who signed the agreement, a subsidy of £2,000 a year, in return for which the Khans undertook to appoint guards for the protection of the employes, property and roads of the syndicate. The Khans subsequently asked that the subsidy be increased by £500 a year in order to provide for the appointment of a Khan to superintend the guards. The syndicate agreed to pay the extra sum.

But difficulties attended the operations of the Company during 1906. The Bakhtiari Chiefs failed to appoint the stipulated guards, and the security of the Syndicate's employes and property was endangered by frequent thefts and assaults by turbulent tribesmen; and in the end a small party of Indian troops had to be sent to guard the camps. The Persian Government, too, refused to recognise the agreement come to between the Syndicate and the Khans.

Early in 1909 the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was formed to work the oil concession obtained by Mr. D'Arcy in 1901. At the end of April 1909 Sir E. Grey telegraphed to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, that the newly formed Anglo-Persian Oil Company wished to acquire immediately a site for a refinery on Abadan Island and a strip of land for a pipe line to connect the refinery with the wells, that the land for the refinery was estimated to be not over 1,000 acres and was uncultivated, as was most of the land which would be required for the pipe line, and the Company were entitled to acquire waste land free of cost by the terms of their concession. The Company, however, recognised that the Shaikh's good-will and co-operation were necessary, and were willing to lend him, through his Majesty's Government, from £5,000 to £6,000 on condition that their application for land was granted, and that the Shaikh gave or procured a good title to it on the Company's behalf. The Company were ready to pay a reasonable market value for the land, if bought, or £500 per annum in full for all land required, if leased for the duration of the concession, or any extension of it, and they would demand interest at 6 per cent. on their loan.

His Majesty's Government directed that the Shaikh should be informed that they were willing to lend him £5,000 or £6,000 on the understanding that he concluded an arrangement with the Oil Company on the above terms, and that he granted to a British company a concession containing exclusive rights to carry out, on lines proposed by Sir William Willcocks, a scheme of irrigation on the Karun. Care was to be taken to represent the loan as coming from His Majesty's Government.

Negotiations followed between the Shaikh and the Company as to terms ; and on the 17th July 1909, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf intimated that the agreement between the Oil Company and the Shaikh of Mohammerah had been signed. All essential conditions were maintained, but some alterations were made in less important details. It was also found necessary to give the Shaikh a separate confidential assurance to the effect that if, when the concession expired, the Persian Government claimed the buildings, machinery, etc., on the land leased from the Shaikh, he would be assisted to arrive at a favourable settlement with that Government by His Majesty's Government. As the Shaikh was apprehensive that he might incur the hostility of the present National leaders owing to the execution by him of such an agreement with a Foreign company, the Oil Company agreed to maintain secrecy as to the terms of the agreement, until the crisis in Tehran was over, and, as far as possible, to delay the commencement of operations at the Mohammerah end.

The following is the text of the principal articles of the agreement :—

(1) The Shaikh undertakes to hire to the said Company an area free of date trees of 650 jaribs of 4,669 square yards per jarib, on Abadan island, situated between the village of Baraim on the North-West and Buwardeh on the South-East, having a frontage of about 2,000 yards on the Shatt-el-Arab, and also a strip of land not less than thirty yards in breadth for a right of way connecting the land above-mentioned with the Bahmanshir River ; but the public rights of way must remain.

(2) Should the said Company find the ground selected as above, after further examination not suitable for their requirements, they should have the right to select other sites of the same area and same description. Should the Company require more land, free of date trees, adjacent to the lands leased to them, the Shaikh undertakes, in case the Company asks for such land within a space of two years from the date of this agreement, to grant them land not exceeding one hundred jaribs in area, at the same moderate rate. If the said Company ask for more land after two years from the date of this agreement, they shall pay rental at the fair current rate of the time for similar land in those localities.

(3) The Shaikh further undertakes to grant free of charge to the Company a strip of land for the laying of such pipe-lines as may be necessary, above or below ground, situated in his lands or in those lands for the time being under his jurisdiction, or leased or purchased by him from others, with access thereto ; and also to grant free in connection with the said pipe-line, such uncultivated land as may be needed by them for telegraph or telephone stations, or pumping stations or quarters for line inspectors and staff, having an area of three jaribs for each pumping station, and one and-a-half jaribs for each of the other stations.

It is to be understood that, at the expiration of the concession, or of any extension or renewal thereof, the Company shall relinquish every pumping or other station that may be erected on these lands, and shall not be entitled to demand refund of expenses in this connection.

It is agreed that in places where the pipe-line is exposed, guards shall be appointed. Further, that the Shaikh will exert himself to the utmost to prevent the wilful setting fire to the oil in the pipe. In the event of such a contingency occurring he will endeavour to the utmost of his power to trace and punish the offenders and, if they possess anything, to recover compensation, but the Shaikh does not accept personally any pecuniary liability for loss which may accrue to the Company from this cause, and will not pay compensation.

(4) The Shaikh further undertakes to hire to the Company an area or areas, aggregating ten jaribs, at Ahwaz and Nasiri, having frontage on the eastern bank (edge) of the River Karun, for the storage of material and building or store-houses, and such other buildings as are needed for the Company's business, at a rate of £1 sterling per jarib per annum, *i.e.*, that the yearly amount of the rent thereof will be £10 sterling.

The Company have power to select a site or sites on the eastern edge of the Karun located opposite the island in the river, upstream from the garden adjacent to the landing place used by steamers plying on the Upper Karun. Should the Company find the ground selected as above, after further examination, not suitable for their requirements, they shall have the right to select other sites of the same area and description and whatever buildings there shall be on these areas shall be left by the Company on the expiry of the lease or of any extension or renewal thereof, and they are not entitled to demand any refund of expenses in this connection.

(5) In order that the Company may be satisfied that it has received from the Shaikh good and sufficient title to these lands, and that no one in future can put forward any claim in regard to the lands, the Shaikh undertakes for the complete validity thereof to cause this document to be signed and sealed by the elders of his tribes.

(6) (Article 6 relates to the appointment of watchmen by the Shaikh, and their payment by the Company.)

(7) (Article 7 governs the Shaikh's responsibility in the matter of losses sustained by the Company, through theft or otherwise, and the punishment of the offenders.)

(8) The Shaikh further grants the right to the Company to make all burnt and unburnt bricks and tiles required by them in the lands for the time being in the hands of the Company and also to erect on the lands occupied by them in accordance with the articles of the agreement, all buildings, structures, and machinery as may be needed by them for the proper execution of their business.

This Company undertakes that on the expiry of the concession, or of the period of the extension or renewal thereof, all these lands which have been acquired from the Shaikh on lease or free of charge, shall be abandoned and shall be given back into the hands of the Shaikh, and the said Company will have no further rights in them.

(9) This lease of land, and all the conditions pertaining thereto, shall remain in force for the full period of the concession granted to Mr. W. K. D'Arcy by His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Persia, dated 28th May 1901, and of any extension or renewal thereof. But on the expiration of the original period, in the event of there being an extension or renewal of the concession, the rent shall be fixed at £1,500 sterling per annum payable annually in advance and the Shaikh shall have no right to demand any further increase. If in consideration of the exigencies of their business, the Company should wish to curtail the period of their lease, in that case twelve calendar (Christian) months' notice of their intention must be given in writing to the Shaikh prior to the termination of the lease. Such notice will be sent to the Shaikh through His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah. If the lease should be thus curtailed, the Company shall make no claim for refund of money that has been paid in advance on account of rent, and the Shaikh likewise shall make no claim for rent for the unexpired period of the lease.

(10) If at any time the Company desire to acquire land on the Karun or Shatt-el-Arab at Mohammerah or Ahwaz, or any other point anywhere in the country under the Shaikh's jurisdiction, for wharves or warehouses for the purposes of their business, the Shaikh undertakes as far as possible to assist the said Company in procuring the said land at favourable rates of lease. It is to be understood that such rent will be paid by the Company themselves.

(11) In consideration of the lease of the lands mentioned in paragraph 1, the Company undertakes to pay rent at a rate of £650 sterling per annum; such rent to be paid in advance every ten years, namely, the amount due to be paid to the Shaikh by drafts of the Company; such payment to be made through His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah, in exchange for the receipt of the Shaikh.

The first payment shall be made by the Company within three days of notice being received by the Directors of the completion of this agreement.

In July 1909, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company expressed to the Foreign Office

their desire to undertake, with the co-operation of the Imperial or Indian Government, a topographical survey of the oil-producing regions of south-west Persia, as a preliminary to an exhaustive geological survey of the same district. The Foreign Office, in reply stated that Sir E. Grey did not feel justified in approaching the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury with a request for authority to incur the expense of sharing in the cost of a topographical survey, and that Viscount Morley also saw no sufficient reason for a grant from Indian revenues for the purpose. He expressed his willingness, however, to ask the Government of India whether they could spare the services of an officer for the purpose on the understanding that the whole of the cost connected with his deputation would be defrayed by the Company.

The Anglo-Persian Oil Company, while regretting these decisions, stated that they had no alternative but to avail themselves of Viscount Morley's offer and asked that the request might be put forward.

The Government of India were accordingly asked whether arrangements could be made to spare the services of an officer for the survey. After settling preliminaries as to the scale of the map, extent of the work and the period for which the services of the officer would be required, the Government of India nominated Mr. Scott, a distinguished officer of the Survey Department on the retired list, for

the duty, and he proceeded to Mohammerah on the 4th Febraury 1910 taking with him two native surveyors and six followers.

In February the Anglo-Persian Oil Company desired to place a launch on

**Proposal of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to place a launch and barges on the upper Karun.** the upper Karun to tow barges for the purpose of transporting material for use in connection with the exploitation of their oil fields, the existing facilities of transport by Lynch and Company's and the Moin's steamers being insufficient. They based their right to do this on certain articles of their concession. The Persian Government objected on the grounds that when the Karun was thrown open to navigation, special reservation was made as to navigation above Ahwaz, and moreover the Moin claimed that under his concession he had exclusive right to navigate the upper Karun. Eventually, permission was obtained for the Company to place a launch on the upper Karun for one year, and His Majesty's Minister informed the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs that he would expect the permission renewed at the expiration of that period.

In December 1909 Mr. Maurice Blake arrived in Tehran with the object of

**Desire of Mr. Blake to acquire the Persian Government's rights under articles 4 and 10 of the D'Arcy Oil Concessions on behalf of certain British financiers.**

endeavouring to acquire the Persian Government's rights under articles 4 and 10 of the D'Arcy Oil Concession. He was prepared to pay, on behalf of a certain British financier, whose name he declined to disclose, £60,000 for the rights, and the financier undertook that the interest he would thus acquire would remain in British possession. Sir G. Barclay informed Mr. Blake that, unless instructions were forthcoming, he could lend him no help. In addressing His Majesty's Government Sir George Barclay expressed the opinion that it was undesirable in the interests of the Oil Company, that the Persian Government should part with their share in an undertaking which was so dependent on the latter's interest and goodwill; he pointed out that, in the event of the present applicant failing in his transaction, the Persian Government might well sell their share and interest to a foreigner, and that the very eagerness which Mr. Blake had shown might well lead the Persian Government to expect applications in the same sense from elsewhere.

Sir E. Grey replied that, unless the British Government had the opportunity of satisfying themselves as to the good faith of the intending purchaser and his financial position, it would be impossible for them to undertake to support Mr. Blake. He added that the rights of the Persian Government should not be allowed to fall into the hands of a foreigner, and that Mr. Blake's request, therefore, could only be considered when the above information was supplied.

Sir G. Barclay replied that Mr. Blake was telegraphing to the financier in question to apply to the Foreign Office, and that he still refused to reveal his name.

On the 30th December, Sir E. Grey telegraphed to Sir G. Barclay that, as the Anglo-Persian Oil Company strongly objected to the proposed sale, he was to inform Mr. Blake that he was unable to support his application. Sir G. Barclay was further instructed strongly to dissuade the Persian Government from alienating their interest in the concession, and, in the event of failure to attain this object by other means, was authorised to inform them that the Company were willing to purchase half their rights on condition that they would undertake not to part with the remainder.

Sir G. Barclay replied that Mr. Blake stated that he had no chance of success, and that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs had expressed a similar opinion, but had promised to inform him, should the negotiations take a more favourable turn, which was a most improbable event. Sir G. Barclay added that he had strongly advised the Minister against parting with the Persian Government's interest in the concession.

Mr. Maurice Blake left Tehran without accomplishing the object of his visit. Mr. Blake was not much disappointed at his want of success, being of opinion that the obscurity of the political outlook greatly increased the speculative character of the transaction. The Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs has been informed



by His Majesty's Minister that he expected to be apprised should any future offers be received, in order that he might inform the Anglo-Persian Oil Company who possessed, morally, a preferential right of acquisition. Sir George Barclay intimated at the same time, however, that the Company were anxious that the Persian Government should retain their interest in the undertaking.

In April 1910, Mr. J. R. Preece, formerly His Majesty's Consul-General at Isphahan, was deputed by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to proceed to Tehran for the purpose of entering into negotiations with the Persian Government, with the object of acquiring a concession to work minerals in the Kerman district, in the name of Mr. M. Tarbett Fleming, a Director of the Burma Oil Company. His Majesty's Government instructed Sir G. Barclay to afford Mr. Preece the necessary assistance and support.

The Company next proposed to send out from England three barges to be used in connection with their launch. They had thousands of tons of cargo lying at Bandar Nasiri awaiting shipment, and they wished to get rid of it.

They contended that the Nasiri Company had failed to fulfill the conditions on which they held the concession for the exclusive right to navigate the upper Karun, and that that concession had been already infringed, since no attempt had been made to prevent its violation by country boats. His Majesty's Government was of opinion that this contention had weight, and accordingly instructed Mr. Marling to endeavour to arrange that permission should be given to the Oil Company to place the three barges on the river. The matter is still under consideration.

Owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining local labour, the Company were recently compelled to import foreign labour contrary to article 12 of their concession. His Majesty's Consul, Mohammerah, however, reported that he was satisfied the Agents of the Company were doing whatever was possible to employ Persian subjects.

In the spring of 1907 a German Banker appeared at Tehran, and was reported to be very active in connection with the establishment there of a German Bank.

On the 30th June 1907 His Majesty's Minister at Tehran reported that the draft German Bank Concession had been submitted to the Council of Ministers. The concession included free sites for bank premises at Tehran and Tabriz, the recovery of debts with Government assistance, the importation of silver for coinage under existing conditions, the option of exploiting twelve of the existing mines owned by Government. Any mention of a loan was omitted, but no doubt private promises had been given. Sir C. Spring-Rice told the Persian Government that His Majesty's Government had no objection to the establishment of a German Bank, but that the British Oil Concession must be respected. He also warned them against giving concessions on islands or on the coast of the Gulf: on this point the Persian Banker, the Muin-ut-Tujjar, who held an exclusive concession for mining red oxide on the island of Ormuz and had a contract with a British firm for the supply to them of all the red oxide mined there, was anxious. British interests were involved in the retention by him of his concession.

The Assembly finally passed the concession for forty-five years, with a capital of £200,000, and free entry of articles for the first installation. The mineral clauses were rejected by the Assembly. The Bank had to be opened within three years, the Central Office being at Tehran, with branches in any other towns of Persia.

The question of the status of the British Post Offices in Persia having been raised by the Belgian Customs authorities in Persia in 1904, a proposal to negotiate a postal agreement between Great Britain and Persia came under consideration.

The Government of India had addressed a letter to the Tehran Legation stating their views on the matter, and on the 20th January 1906, Mr. Grant-Duff

replied that he agreed with the opinion expressed by the Government of India, and thought that, if possible, we should limit the question to an agreement in regard to parcel mails only, to be negotiated at Tehran and that any action which tended to weaken our privileged position in the Persian Gulf would appear undesirable. A copy of a despatch formulating the views of His Majesty's Government was handed by Mr. Grant-Duff to M. Naus, who informed him verbally that he had no objection to the conclusion of an agreement on the lines proposed, but would discuss the matter fully on his return to Tehran from Constantinople whither he was proceeding to negotiate a Commercial Treaty between Persia and Turkey.

In April 1906 the Grand Vizier wrote to Mr. Grant-Duff stating that he saw no objection to the proposed Parcel Post Convention; at the same time he took the opportunity to complain of the action of the British Indian Post Offices, in requiring that letters handed to them by the Persian Post Offices for transmission to their destination should bear Indian stamps. It was pointed out to His Highness that this requirement was only in respect of letters posted in places where there are British Indian Post Offices, and was not applied to letters from the interior of Persia. The question was raised privately by the Persian Delegates at the Postal Congress at Rome in June; but on being assured by their British colleagues that their representation on this, as well as on two other points connected with the Gulf Post Offices, would receive sympathetic and early consideration, they refrained from bringing the question formally before the Congress.

On the 10th April 1906 Mr. Grant-Duff had telegraphed the views of the Grand Vizier to the Government of India, and added that the Persian Government hoped that if they accepted the Convention, the Indian Post Offices would on their part allow Persians in the south to stamp with Persian stamps letters addressed to India instead of compelling them to use Indian stamps, by which arrangement the Persian Exchequer suffered loss. In reply the Government of India informed him that in return for equivalent concessions they were prepared to accede to the Persian Government's request; and that as soon as information was received of the conclusion of a satisfactory Parcel Post Agreement, and of the grant by Persia of such other concessions as Mr. Grant-Duff considered it advisable to ask for, instructions would be issued to Indian Gulf Post Offices to accept local letters stamped with Persian stamps and posted in Persian Post Offices for transmission abroad. They added that Mr. Grant-Duff could, perhaps, utilise this concession to obtain a reasonable settlement of the Bandar Abbas cable dispute.

Sir C. Spring-Rice telegraphed on the 4th September 1906, that he had informed the Persian Government unofficially of the conditions laid down by the Government of India and that they had replied that questions arising out of Postal Conventions are customarily settled between the Administrations concerned, that Persia was only demanding the observance of Conventions, and such observance could not be made contingent upon extraneous matters. The British Minister thought that the latter argument was difficult to answer. The parcel post question would have to be settled with the Customs, but he did not anticipate any difficulty regarding it; the question of the Bandar Abbas cable must, however, be treated with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and in the prevailing situation Sir C. Spring-Rice doubted the possibility of a satisfactory settlement. He enquired whether the Government of India wished him to drop the question of the Bandar Abbas cable for the present; or at all events not to make it a *sine qua non* of conceding the postal demands of the Persian Government, as this might lead to a reference to Berne; or whether they wished him to proceed with the negotiations regarding the former question. In reply, the Government of India telegraphed on the 18th September that there was no objection to the separation of the parcel post question from that of the Bandar Abbas cable, but in return for the proposed concession regarding British Post Offices in the Persian Gulf they enquired whether it would be possible to secure the employment of a less prejudiced postal agency in Seistan and Birjand where the postal sowars are Russian *protégés*. If this could not be secured, perhaps, some suitable equivalent for our concession could be suggested by the Resident at Bushire.

On the 8th October, Mr. Marling (His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran) telegraphed that he understood he was authorized to intimate to the Persian Gov-



ernment the following :—First, that the Government of India were ready to grant the concession required, but on condition of the non-employment at Seistan and Birjand of objectionable sowars. Second, that he was empowered to proceed with the negotiations for concluding the Parcel Post arrangement. Third, that the Government of India would like the question of the position of the Bandar Abbas telegraph office and cable-house to be settled. In reply, he was informed on the 19th October that, while not making it an absolute condition, the Government of India thought the non-employment of objectionable sowars at Seistan and Birjand very desirable : and that he was correct in his second and third assumptions.

On the 11th November 1907, Mr. Marling telegraphed that the only modification of the Constantinople Regulations proposed, *mutatis mutandis*, in the Parcel Post Convention by the Administrator of Customs was in Article III. It was desired that parcels should, on delivery to the Custom-House, be accompanied with original documents, which the Customs authorities would retain in case of claims being made by the country of origin. Mr. Marling also said that if traders' samples were excluded from the operation of the Convention, he feared there would be trouble.

¶ The Government of India informed Mr. Marling on the 28th February 1908 that the Indian postal authorities had no objection to the proposed modifications of the Constantinople Regulations, but they considered that an attempt should be made to exclude traders' samples from Customs examination, as these samples were, according to the custom of the Postal Union, transmitted as part of the letter mail. If, however, it was necessary to yield the point, then the examination and delivery of sample packets should take place not at the Persian Custom House but at the Indian Post Office of destination. It would also be necessary to inform the Indian Post Office of any special limits as to the weight of samples as well as any other special conditions that might be imposed. The Indian Post Office should also be furnished by the Persian Government with a list of articles the importation of which was absolutely forbidden. Mr. Marling was also informed that, if he considered it feasible, the Government of India would much prefer that no steps should be taken to alter the practice now followed by British Post Offices until a satisfactory settlement of Pasand Khan's case had been secured. If possible, a copy of the draft arrangement should be forwarded before it was concluded, in order that the Government of India might be in a position to offer any further observations which they might wish.

On the 26th March, Mr. Marling forwarded for examination by the Indian Postal Administration the following draft which had been drawn up in consultation with M. Mornard, the Belgian Administrator :—

Un employé de la Douane Impériale se rendra au bureau de Poste indien pour examiner sommairement les paquets d'échantillons. Si cet examen fait découvrir des paquets ou des groupes de paquets, adressés à un seul destinataire et renfermant des marchandises de la même espèce, dont le contenu serait passible d'un droit supérieur à un kran, tel paquet ou groupe de paquets seront soumis au même régime que les colis postaux.

Le délai dans lequel l'employé de la Douane est tenu de se présenter au bureau de Poste indien pour la visite des paquets est celui fixé par l'Article VIII.

Mr. Marling remarked that the only observation he had to offer was that M. Mornard could perhaps be induced to raise the limit below which duty was not chargeable. In reply to the three questions which had been raised by the Government of India he said that M. Mornard had informed him that—

- (1) The limit of weight for sample packets was that prescribed by the International Postal Conventions in force.
- (2) The Persian Government desired to make no other special condition.
- (3) The articles, the importation of which was entirely prohibited, were those mentioned in the Commercial Treaties in force.

Mr. Marling added that M. Mornard did not appear particularly anxious at present about the conclusion of any convention or agreement and expressed himself as quite satisfied with the existing *modus vivendi* for the treatment of postal parcels. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires enquired what form the agreement should

take. He pointed out that there was reason to apprehend that, if he tried to induce the Minister of Commerce to sign the instrument with him, he might decline to do so without the authority of Parliament, and, should the question come before that body, it was pretty certain that, in its present temper, a disagreeable discussion as to the position of the British Post Offices might ensue. He suggested that the difficulty might perhaps be best avoided by an exchange of notes with the Minister for Foreign Affairs; and added that he would not lose sight of the wishes of the Government of India as regards the Pasand Khan question.

In reply Mr. Marling was informed on the 9th July that the draft regulation regarding sample packets appeared to be suitable, and that the Government of India saw no objection to his suggestion that the method of concluding the Parcel Post Agreement should be by an exchange of notes between His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, and the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

A draft of the proposed arrangements for the treatment of postal parcels arriving at the British Indian Post Offices in the Persian Gulf, as drawn up by M. Mornard, was subsequently forwarded by Sir G. Barclay with his despatch of the 2nd November 1908. The draft followed the lines of the Constantinople Regulations with the modification that had been approved by the Indian Government and the addition of an article relating to postal packets containing samples. Sir G. Barclay also requested that in the event of the draft being approved by the Indian Government he might be empowered to conclude the arrangement by an exchange of notes with the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In regard to these proposals the Political Resident in the Gulf raised certain points, the settlement of which caused some delay.

Eventually he was informed that the proposed agreement would not affect the postal rates for parcels despatched from India to British Indian Post Offices in the Gulf, and His Majesty's Minister was asked to proceed with the necessary exchange of notes with the Persian Government in regard to the agreement, being informed at the same time that it would be convenient that the agreement should take effect from the 1st October 1910. The agreement was signed at Tehran on 24th June 1910 and will come into effect on the 1st October 1910.

In a despatch, dated the 15th March 1907, Sir C. Spring-Rice stated that, in consequence of representations made to him by the local Director of the Indo-European Telegraph Department and by His Majesty's Consul at Kerman-shah as to objections raised by the Persian Post Office to the use of postage stamps overprinted "O. H. M. S." for the pre-payment of official correspondence from India, he had referred the question to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The postal authorities in England, who were consulted, were of opinion that, as Article XI of the Postal Union Convention of Washington of 1897 clearly stipulates that pre-payment of postage is to be effected only by means of postage stamps valid in the country of origin for the correspondence of private individuals, the Persian Post Office was within its rights in raising the objection detailed above. Sir C. Spring-Rice therefore suggested that the Government of India should issue instructions that in future ordinary stamps should be used for official correspondence in Persia; and the Government of India took steps to carry out Sir C. Spring-Rice's request.

In June 1906, Mr. Grant-Duff, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, called attention to the relations existing between His Majesty's Legation and the Consular Officers in Persia appointed by the Government of India. In the first place he suggested that copies of all correspondence addressed by His Majesty's Consuls to the Government of India should, without exception, be sent to His Majesty's Legation. This arrangement seemed to the Government of India free from objection except that it seemed unnecessary to send copies of correspondence regarding accounts, entertainment of subordinate establishment and routine matters.

Use of British Indian official postage stamps in correspondence with Persia prohibited.

Relations between His Majesty's Legation and Consular Officers appointed by the Government of India.

In the second place, Mr. Grant-Duff requested that Consuls nominated by the Government of India should be informed on first appointment that his Majesty's Legation is the central British authority in Persia, and that they are directly responsible, as regards their duties, to His Majesty's Representative, for the time being, at the Court of Tehran. With regard to this request the Government of India did not quite comprehend what was the practical difference in the method of the performance of their duties by such Consular Officers which Mr. Grant-Duff wished to see introduced. It was understood that Mr. Grant-Duff was inclined to think that instructions, on other than routine matters, were issued by the Government of India to Consular Officers without consulting or informing the British Minister. A careful search was, however, made in the correspondence which had passed between the Government of India and the principal Consulates in Persia during the past year, and a list was sent to the Legation showing the only matters, other than routine ones, in which orders had been issued without consulting or informing the Legation. These matters did not seem to be such as would have interested His Majesty's Minister; but, if it was desired, arrangements would be made to send His Majesty's Legation at Tehran copies of such communications in future.

If a more radical change in the existing practice was contemplated, the Government of India would be glad to know the precise terms in which His Majesty's Minister would recommend that the proposed instructions should be conveyed.

It was added in reply to His Majesty's Minister that all Consuls and Consuls-General nominated by the Government of India were carefully instructed that they must conduct their duties in due subordination to His Majesty's Legation in Tehran, and similar instructions were issued to any Vice-Consuls who did not conduct their correspondence through a superior Consular Officer.

In August 1906 the Persian Government promulgated a law relating to jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases in which foreign subjects are implicated. Mr. Grant-Duff informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that as the law affected the procedure laid down in the Treaty of Turkomanchai which governs cases in which British and Persian subjects are implicated, it could not be accepted without the instructions of His Majesty's Government and that pending the receipt of such orders he would continue, as before, to refer cases in which British subjects and Persians are concerned, to the Foreign Office Tribunal.

On the 23rd October 1906, the Foreign Office requested His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran to state his opinion as to how far His Majesty's Government could accept the recently promulgated law relating to jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases in which foreigners might be involved in Persia. In reply, Sir C. Spring-Rice gave his opinion that it was quite impossible for His Majesty's Government to admit Persian jurisdiction over foreigners in the present primitive condition of the country. He added that he was well aware that, under the adequate guarantees afforded by the system of consular assistance, foreigners in Turkey are justifiable in the native courts, but it should be remembered that in Turkey side by side with the Sheri law there is an elaborate code of civil and criminal jurisprudence; nothing of the kind, however, exists in Persia, so that the law to be administered by the Tribunals under the new law would be the Islamic Law based on the Koran. With the prejudiced or corrupt judges who would assuredly be appointed in Persia, the door would, if the new law was accepted, be left open to the perpetration of every kind of legal injustice towards Christians, and in fact, if the decision of the court is given in accordance with the law of Islam, it would be a difficult matter to obtain its reversal by the Persian Government through diplomatic intervention. He pointed out that the Sheri law is totally unsuited to the complex conditions of modern life, and even if it were possible to ensure impartial justice between Christians and Muslims, it would be in the last degree undesirable to accept any law having the same object as that now under consideration, until a code in accordance with modern requirements has been put into force. Under the existing system, foreigners have a far better prospect of obtaining substantial justice than under the new law. Neither the French nor the German Legation

had received official information of the existence of the new law, but the Russian Minister has informed the Persian Government that this Government cannot admit of the law being enforced as regards Russian subjects as it is inconsistent with existing Treaty stipulations.

In 1905 it was brought to the notice of the Government of India that the Persian Government had since 1903 levied customs dues on the rations for the detachment of native infantry employed to guard the telegraph station at Jask. The question had formed the subject of correspondence between the British Legation at Tehran and the Persian Government, but the Customs Department maintained their right to levy the dues in question. In a telegram, dated the 14th December 1905, Mr. Grant-Duff suggested that the difficulty could be overcome by addressing the provisions direct to the officer in charge of the telegraph station. The Government of India considered that the exemption from duty under the Jask Agreement of 1887 (under which the "telegraph officials, and their true, positive, and salaried servants" are exempt from customs dues) could be insisted on with greater force if the Indo-European Telegraph Department were debited with the charge for the guard as a matter of book accounts; the guard then being treated as in the employ of the Telegraph Department for the time being, the rations would be addressed to the officer in charge of the station. On the 14th March 1906, the Director, Persian Gulf Section, Indo-European Telegraph Department, was addressed in view to this arrangement being carried out.

On the 22nd May 1906 the Director, Persian Gulf Telegraphs, reported that the necessary arrangements would be made for the charges for the guard at Jask being disbursed by the Telegraph Department, and for the rations being addressed to the officer in charge of the station. And on the 2nd June 1906 Mr. Grant-Duff was informed of the arrangement which had been made. The Persian Customs Department have, so far, raised no further objections.

In December 1904, the Persian Customs Department claimed the right to levy duty from the Residency Surgeon, Extra Assistant Resident in the Persian Gulf and others not mentioned as exempted persons in the *Règlement Douanier*. The demand was complied with under protest and the difficulty finally overcome by giving Vice-Consular powers to the first officer and also to the First Assistant Resident; by styling the Extra Assistant Resident, Secretary to the Consul-General for Fars and other Dragomans, thus bringing those officers within the exempted persons under the *Règlement*. In this connection, on the 6th December 1905, Mr. Grant-Duff forwarded a copy of a note addressed to Mr. Priem, Administrator of Customs and Posts, enclosing a list of British officials in Persia who have the right under article 27 of the *Règlement Douanier* to enjoy the privilege of exemption from the payment of duty on goods imported *bonâ fide* for their own use. The Persian Government have, however, declined to admit the right of the physicians, as such, attached to the Legation and Consulates in Persia to the benefit of the terms of article 27 of the *Règlement*. This matter has formed the subject of communications to our Consular officers in Persia.

On the 25th February 1906, Major Cox intimated that the Persian Government had accepted the list of British officials in Persia for whom the Tehran Legation claimed exemption from the payment of customs duty on goods imported *bonâ fide* for their own use. This list does not include Legation physicians as such.

In August 1906, Sir Dinshaw Petit renewed his scheme for educational assistance to the Parsis of Persia. Sir Dinshaw Petit originally proposed in June 1904 to meet from his own pocket the cost of educating two or three Persian or Parsi boys annually, through a course extending for about three years, and to bear the cost of (in the the case of Persians) bringing them from Persia and in all cases of sending them to Persia on completion of their education. The offer was contingent on Government

undertaking to support the boys thus educated on their return to Persia for a certain fixed period. When the proposals were renewed in 1906, the Government of India, in reply to the Government of Bombay, expressed entire sympathy with the objects which Sir Dinshaw had in view, and said that they would welcome the adoption of his scheme provided the expenses were defrayed entirely out of private contributions on lines already indicated; but they considered that there were objections to the support out of Government funds of the young men in Persia after they had completed their studies and while they were making their way in their professions. It was further stated that the Government of India were still prepared to consider a scheme for the institution of two or three scholarships to be held by Parsi boys from South-East Persia while undergoing education in Bombay. But it does not appear that the matter was further proceeded with.

In connection with the recent murder of a Parsi merchant at Yezd, the Minister at Tehran telegraphed on the 21st February 1907 that he was in constant communication with the Chief Priests, who had taken most energetic steps in the matter and were insisting on justice being done. They were fully aware of the necessity of encouraging Parsi enterprise and of affording protection, but they asked him to remain in the background as far as possible. The Minister requested that the Parsi community at Home might be informed accordingly and told that he would do all he could, but that official interference would do them harm, and that they had better trust to the private steps which were being taken on the spot by the Legation and by prominent Parsis.

At the request of the Secretary of State the Bombay Government was instructed on the 15th April to inform the heads of the Parsi community in Bombay confidentially that though official steps could not be taken by the Legation in Tehran, owing to the fact that the Parsi murdered at Yezd was not a British subject, yet the Minister had pointed out personally, in a private capacity, to the Persian authorities, the criminal folly of allowing outrages of the kind to pass without punishment, especially at a moment when Persia was so dependent on outside sympathy and assistance. Sir M. Bhownaggee, to whom a reference had been made on the subject of the attack on the Parsi community at Yezd, replying on the 27th June 1907, requested that his warmest thanks on behalf of the Parsi community should be communicated both to the Secretary of State and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran for the truly sympathetic way in which they had, ever since his representations on the subject of the murder of the Zoroastrian merchant of Yezd were submitted, exercised their influence with the proper authorities in Persia to secure justice and protection for the Parsi inhabitants there. He stated that, although the culprits charged with the murder had not been punished, several correspondents in Persia, among them a brother of the murdered person, had assured him that what had been done so far, and especially the interest evinced by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, had tended in the direction of securing the fraternity at present against the imminent danger of similar attacks. These writers had expressed themselves in grateful terms with a request that Sir M. Bhownaggee should mention their feelings in the proper quarter.

In April 1910, the Persian Government asked the Imperial Bank of Persia to obtain expert advice and purchase for them 50,000 rifles and 10,000 Mauser revolvers, of the most up-to-date pattern, with 300 rounds of ammunition for each weapon, the Government offering 2 per cent. commission and also to pay out-of-pocket expenses. The Bank was willing to accept the offer, and enquired if His Majesty's Government saw any objection. The proposal was communicated to the Russian Government, and on the latter delaying their answer and apparently making difficulties in the way of the transaction, while the Bank was pressing for a reply, His Majesty's Government explained to the Russian Government that it would be difficult to defer a reply to the Bank, who were under no obligation to consult His Majesty's Government and might have carried through the transaction without any reference to them. Besides British trade suffered owing to the insecurity prevailing on the southern

Supply of Arms and ammunition to the Persian Government.

roads in Persia, and the Persian Government had stated that the only assistance which His Majesty's Government could give them in restoring security on the roads was by supplying them with arms and money. The recent disorders in the southern district had attracted considerable attention and were likely to raise questions in Parliament, and His Majesty's Government would be in an indefensible position if it could be shown that, in deference to the Russian Government and to the detriment of British interests, it had caused the Bank to postpone or refuse compliance with the request of the Persian Government. When this was communicated, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs expressed his regret at the delay, but said that his Government had been previously asked by the Persian Government to supply arms, and that he was in communication with one of his colleagues, presumably the Russian Minister of War, and would take immediate steps to obtain a reply from him.

The Russian Government ultimately replied on the 16th June 1910, suggesting in effect that they should supply at once to the Persian Government the required number of rifles and rifle ammunition at a certain price. The revolvers, however, they probably could not supply, as the rights of the inventor of that weapon were reserved. This was communicated to the Imperial Bank of Persia, and they were asked to state whether the Bank's directors would propose something which might become the basis of an arrangement whereby the contract for the supply of arms and ammunition might be shared with the Russian Government. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs considered it very desirable that the Bank should endeavour, through the Persian Government, to come to some understanding for co-operation with the Russian Government in the proposed contract. The Bank, however, while expressing their wish to fall in with the views of His Majesty's Foreign Office, declined to agree to the dividing of the contract with Russia. The only alternative, they said, would be to let the contract go altogether to Russia, but this they could not recommend in the interests either of the Persian Government or of the Bank and the British manufacturer; besides it would be outside the Bank's province, as well as detrimental to their interests, to make the suggestion proposed, especially in view of the confidence placed in the Bank by the Persian Government. The matter was again referred to the Bank with the explanation that the division which was suggested by His Majesty's Government was that the Russian Government should supply the rifles and the Imperial Bank the revolvers; and the Bank were asked to state whether they would consider such an arrangement acceptable. Their reply had not been received at the close of the period under review—

#### PERSONNEL.

*(Vide Appendix I.)*

## CHAPTER II.

## THE PERSIAN GULF REGION.

The relaxation after Lord Curzon's departure in 1905 of the active and almost ostentatiously forward policy which had during his Viceroyalty been pursued by the Indian Government in the Persian Gulf, tended not unnaturally to a marked falling off in the reflex measures of all rival Powers in that region; while the Anglo-Russian Agreement which shortly followed, encouraged as it was by France, practically withdrew altogether from the roll of contestants in this arena, two Powers which had for some years been England's most formidable competitors there—*viz.*, Russia and France. Germany

## German activity.

seemed to be the only serious competitor left. Her activities in Persia proper, during the period under review, have been already indicated in Chapter I; cases illustrating her activity in the Gulf region, and the steps taken by the British and Indian Governments to resist it, will now be noticed.

Almost the first, and perhaps most serious case to arise after Lord Minto's arrival was in connection with Abu Musa Island, situated inside the mouth of the Gulf, about 40 miles off the Pirate or Trucial Coast. In 1898 the Shaikh of

(1) *German lease of red-oxide mines in Abu Musa.*

Shargah granted a lease of the red-oxide mines in Abu Musa Island to one Hassan-Ali-Samaiyeh, a British subject and resident of Lingah, and two other partners.

In December 1904, on the strength of a report from the British Agent at Lingah to the effect that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co., the representative of a German firm in Bahrain, had contemplated visiting Abu Musa with a view to taking up the export of red oxidet, he Shaikh of Shargah and the Concessionaires were specifically warned by the Political Resident against entering into any ill-considered compact with the German firm. The Shaikh had already received a general warning in 1898 from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf not to grant trade monopolies without consulting him. Nevertheless on the 1st June 1906, Hassan Samaiyeh, claiming to act for his two partners, entered into a contract with Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. granting to the latter a monopoly of the output of the red oxide mined on the island for four years, with preferential option to renew the contract at the end of that period. When reporting the circumstances connected with the execution of the contract, Major Cox urged that, in view of the political importance of preventing the acquisition by Germany of vested rights in the Gulf, an attempt should be made to extinguish the concession which had been secured by Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co.

The Government of India concurred in this view, and discussed with the Resident the best means of rendering Wonckhaus' lease inoperative; meanwhile they ordered that no buildings or wharves should be constructed on Abu Musa. In February 1907, Major Cox reported that the Shaikh had decided to withdraw the concession from Hassan Samaiyeh, in view of his unauthorized action in subletting the contract; and under instructions from the Government of India Hassan Samaiyeh was informed of the Shaikh's decision.

In order to stop further operations by the Concessionaires, the Shaikh sent men to Abu Musa, but found that the mining community there had been strengthened and that force would be necessary to oust them. The Shaikh, therefore, wished for advice as to how to act, seeing that the Concessionaire was a British subject. In October, with the assent of the Home Government, the Concessionaire was served with a notice, signed by the Shaikh, requiring the removal of all the miners within a stated time. This notice was served in the presence of the Residency Agent at Lingah, who at the same time was authorized to deliver a verbal communication to the effect that the Shaikh's action was approved by the British Government, who would support him in enforcing his orders if the Concessionaire failed to comply with them. Further, a British gun-boat would be sent within ten days to see whether the removal had taken place. This procedure sufficed, and the Concessionaire's men left the island. But the Concessionaire and Wonckhaus threatened the Shaikh with retaliation by the German Government, and intimated that they would send men to protect their property; and they followed up this threat by despatching a party to Abu Musa in a boat flying the German flag.



The party consisted of Mr. Brown, Wonckhaus' local representative, the Concessionaire, and about 26 men; but they were prevented by the Shaikh from doing anything more than just landing for a short time a couple of men; and they then sailed back to Lingah. But having thus failed to effect their object, which they had given out was to plant the German flag on the oxide mines, they now had recourse to diplomatic action. The German Consul at Bushire sent his Dragoman with a letter to the Shaikh refusing to recognize the latter's cancellation of Wonckhaus's concession, and threatening a claim to heavy indemnity on the part of the German firm. The German Minister at Tehran also represented the case to the British Legation—a move which Her Majesty's Representative considered to be "an ill-chosen attempt to dispute the British position in the Gulf"—and the consideration of it was undertaken by His Majesty's Government in London.

Early in 1908, in consequence of a rumour that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. intended to send a vessel to remove the accumulated red-oxide that had already been mined, the Secretary of State telegraphed to His Majesty's Minister at Tehran that the greatest caution was necessary pending an examination of the German case, and that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. should be allowed in any case and without conditions to ship all accumulated oxide, and that the Shaikh of Shargah should be so informed. Further, some official should visit Abu Musa to ensure that, without trouble or conflict with the Shaikh or his men, all proper facilities were given to Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. for removing the accumulated oxide already mined.

Subsequently, the Political Resident reported that the German Consul at Bushire insisted that, in accordance with his instructions from Berlin, the consent of the British Government to the removal of the accumulation of oxide covered all oxide already excavated on the island; and that he had demanded the removal, not only of the oxide lying on the shore "ready for shipment", but also of that lying inland. The matter was referred to the Secretary of State, who ruled that it was necessary, in view of the communications already made to Berlin, to permit the removal of all oxide which had been excavated, and the Resident should arrange for the work of cleaning, bringing the mineral to the shore, etc., the object to be aimed at being that, without prejudice to, and pending a settlement, which would necessarily take time, some temporary arrangement should be made to supply Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. every month with a limited amount of oxide to enable them to fulfil their contracts. So long as the stuffs already excavated sufficed for the purpose of continuous supply, it would not be necessary to undertake further mining operations, but preparations to resume mining were to be undertaken in good time to prevent any interruption of the supply.

In April, a German steamer visited Abu Musa and removed about 1,810 tons of red-oxide, leaving a balance on the beach of about 400 tons. Subsequently, the Resident raised the question of the re-commencement of mining operations at Abu Musa, as the Shaikh had been approached by applicants for a contract. But His Majesty's Government decided that it was impossible to approach a British firm with proposals for the permanent working of the oxide until the German question was settled. Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co., however, took no further steps for the time being to remove oxide from Abu Musa; and this inactivity on the part of the firm, coupled with information to the effect that their last shipment was lying unsaleable at Hamburg, led to a reasonable doubt as to whether Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. had, as they alleged, forward contracts to fulfil. The Secretary of State was accordingly informed of the position of affairs, and it was pointed out that, in the statement of the German case, stress had been laid on the loss which Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. would suffer owing to their failure to fulfil their forward contracts in oxide. In view of the doubt as to the existence of such contracts, it seemed desirable, if possible, to obtain definite information from the German Government as to the nature, and as to the intentions of Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. regarding further shipments. The Secretary of State, however, thought there was no particular advantage in approaching the German Government, unless any particular British firm desired soon to begin purchasing oxide from Abu Musa.

In March 1909, the Resident in the Gulf reported that a definite order had been given by Messrs. Strick & Co., a British firm, for a sample shipment of oxide urgently; and that he had therefore made the necessary arrangements for the immediate commencement of mining the amount required at Abu Musa under the supervision



of the Residency Agent at Lingah. His Majesty's Government approved this action on the assumption that care would be taken not to supply any oxide to Messrs. Strick, which could be claimed by Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. But the German Consul at Bushire objected to these mining operations at Abu Musa, and sent in an official protest, demanding that all operations should be stopped on the ground that the claim of the German firm was not limited to oxide previously mined, and that the shipment or excavation of fresh oxide would be an encroachment on their rights. His Majesty's Government, however, directed Major Cox to take no notice of the German protest, and, if again approached by the Consul, to point out the limited character of the undertaking, and draw attention to the failure of Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. to proceed with this shipments. And in reply to a note from the German Embassy on the subject, the German Government were reminded of the restricted nature of the undertaking in regard to Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. and informed of the scope of the present operations; they were also told that the rights of the Shaikh were being fully reserved by His Majesty's Government.

On the 13th July 1909, the Secretary of State informed the Government of India that, pending the settlement of the case, the German Government asked for an undertaking that there should be no further mining. His Lordship added that the question of giving a pledge was under consideration, but that, in any case, the controversy had reached a stage at which no further operations could be allowed by us in practice, and asked that instructions might be sent to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, who was accordingly informed to this effect.

On the 22nd August, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. had informed him, through the German Vice-Consul, that they wished to remove to the beach for shipment some more of the oxide already mined. On receipt of this communication, Major Cox enquired the name of the vessel in which the oxide would be shipped, and the probable date of its arrival, stating that it was necessary for him to know these details, as he was responsible that no unfortunate incident should take place at the time of the shipment. In reporting the case Major Cox stated that he presumed that the provisional instructions issued by His Majesty's Secretary of State as to the suspension of mining operations were not intended to modify the standing instructions under which the Resident was required to see that all reasonable facilities were accorded to Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. for removing the accumulated material. Major Cox, however, expressed the hope that, should the stoppage of mining operations be agreed to, pending the settlement of the matter in dispute, it might be considered possible, after the present shipment, to close the island altogether to oxide industry, until the controversy was laid to rest. He also raised the question of compensating the Shaikh of Shargah and Esa bin Abdul Latif.

On the 27th September, the Government of India informed the Secretary of State that they concurred in Major Cox's view that the pledge which had been given to the German Government, involving the cessation of mining operations, would prove detrimental to British prestige and interests in the Gulf, unless the island were closed entirely to the oxide industry. This measure would, however, raise the question of compensating the Shaikh of Shargah. In the circumstances, the Government of India enquired whether the German Government had been informed, as suggested by Sir E. Grey, that the promise of His Majesty's Government to cause mining operations to be suspended pending a settlement of the dispute, had been given on the understanding that the German Government were prepared definitely to state their views without delay, and that the present situation could not be prolonged indefinitely.

In reply, the Secretary of State stated, on the 10th October, that the German Government had been informed on the 21st September that His Majesty's Government could not consent to the present situation being prolonged indefinitely, unless the German Government undertook that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. would not only refrain from extracting more oxide, but also, pending the settlement of the whole question, from removing the oxide already mined. He added that, if the German Government gave the required undertaking, the resulting "sterilization" of the island should, probably, not affect the British position in the Gulf materially, and he observed that the reply of the German Government might be awaited.

before considering the question of compensating the Shaikh of Shargah. Major Trevor, the First Assistant Resident in charge of the current duties of the Residency, was informed accordingly.

Subsequently on the 16th November, His Majesty's Secretary of State telegraphed permission for the shipment of the 400—500 tons of oxide already mined and Major Trevor was informed accordingly.

On the 4th December, Major Trevor forwarded copy of correspondence with the German Vice-Consul regarding the shipment by Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. of oxide already mined, the removal of which had been agreed to. The German Vice-Consul attributed the delay to the conditions imposed by Major Cox on Hassan Samaiyeh which were to the effect that he could collect and ship oxide for the German firm on condition that he undertook, in writing, not to send any armed men to the island, nor to attempt to interfere with the mines, nor to take any oxide other than that left on the beach by the *S. S. Louise* in 1908 or the heaps taken out from the mine by himself and partners. Abdulla bin Hassan, his brother, was also only authorized to proceed to the island when the ship arrived. The German firm were anxious to send the latter to look after the mining. Major Trevor thought that there was no reason why this man should go to the island, and that there were many reasons why he should not, and he further believed that the desire to ship the oxide was expressed solely with a view to keeping alive Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co.'s interest in the island.

Major Trevor suggested, if it had been agreed between His Majesty's Government and the German Government to "sterilise" the island, that he might be authorized to inform the German Vice-Consul that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. should effect the shipment of 400 tons of oxide before a certain date, after which, in accordance with the agreement between the British and German Governments, no further shipments of oxide by any one would be permitted until the whole question had been settled. Major Trevor proposed that one month from the date of the communication to the German Vice-Consul should be the final date for the shipment.

The German Vice-Consul at Bushire proposed as a compromise that a suggestion made by Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co., for their coolies to undertake the shipment of the 400 tons of oxide should be accepted, as their contractor was not allowed to visit the island except under conditions which he would not accept. Major Trevor asked for instructions, as the proposal would have the effect of giving Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. a direct interest in the island pointing out, however, that permission to remove the oxide already mined had been accorded. The matter was referred to the Secretary of State who replied on the 19th February that His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the conditions attached to the presence of Hassan in the island were reasonable and should be upheld and that it was not desirable that the German firm should be allowed to send their coolies. Lord Morley directed that the Acting Political Resident should inform the German Vice-Consul in a friendly manner that the reasons for raising the question of the arrangements for facilitating shipment of oxide on behalf of Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. at this late hour were not understood by His Majesty's Government, inasmuch as the arrangements were not questioned in 1908 and had in no respect been changed, so far as His Majesty's Government had been informed. The Resident was to add that His Majesty's Government would be glad to know in what respect the arrangements were irksome, but that, in the meantime, they regretted that they were unable to modify them, in view of their responsibility for maintaining order in the island. The Political Resident was instructed to act accordingly.

On the 25th February, Major Trevor called on the German Vice-Consul and explained the views of His Majesty's Government, regarding the desire of Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. to effect a shipment with their own coolies. It transpired during the interview that the proposed shipment of the 400 tons was on account of Hassan and not on Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co.'s own account, and that it was one of the shipments to India which Hassan was allowed in his contract with Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co., the latter merely proposing to arrange for the despatch of the oxide. The

German Vice-Consul added that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. intended to send coolies in charge of Hamid, brother of Hassan, and suggested that the coolies might be sent by Hassan in Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co.'s name. Major Trevor informed him that he thought there would be no objection if Hassan accepted the conditions hitherto imposed and sent the coolies in charge of Hamid, but that without reference to Government, he could not agree to Hassan making a shipment on his own account.

Eventually the question of shipment by Hassan was settled when Colonel Cox visited Lingah and incidentally saw him and Abdulla, who told him that it was of no importance to them for Abdulla, whom the German firm were anxious to send to the island to look after the mining, to have access to the island and that it was not they, but the Germans, who had pressed it. Colonel Cox informed them that Government had consented to the removal of oxide on the understanding that it was to fulfil Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co.'s contracts and not for the benefit of Hassan, but that concurrence having been accorded, he was loth to go back on it. If they could satisfy him in the matter of Abdulla's access to the island, he was prepared, in anticipation of the concurrence of the Shaikh of Shargah and Government, to agree to allow him, as a favour, to ship this particular consignment without pressing the question as to whom it was for. They gave Colonel Cox a satisfactory undertaking regarding the extent of Abdulla's access to the island, and he authorized Hassan to ship by the next convenient steamer, subject to confirmation. He hoped that his action would be approved in order to eliminate this side issue. The Government of India reported the matter to Secretary of State suggesting that Colonel Cox's action might be confirmed.

On the 12th April, Colonel Cox reported that the S. S. *Nasiri* had since asked and been accorded permission to comply with Hassan's request to take this shipment of oxide. He explained to the German Vice-Consul the circumstances in which he felt warranted, in anticipation of the concurrence of Government and of the Shaikh, in according this permission to Hassan, without pursuing further the question of the consignee's precise status. Colonel Cox added that his object was to eliminate the side issue, and that it must be regarded as without prejudice to the main case under discussion between the two Governments. The Secretary of State was informed accordingly and confirmed Colonel Cox's action.

The German Chargé d'Affaires in London was informed that the attitude assumed by the British authorities in permitting the shipment of oxide by the S. S. *Nasiri* must not be construed as indicating that His Majesty's Government recognize any right on Hassan's part to ship oxide to India on his own account or as prejudicing their case in respect of the general question under discussion between the two Governments.

Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. did not limit their enterprise in the Gulf to red-oxide working. In September 1907, the attention of His Majesty's Government was drawn to the activity of the German firm, Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co., in the mother-of-pearl and oyster shell trade in the Persian Gulf. It was suggested that the British India Steam Navigation Company, who did some work in the shell fishing industry at Bahrain, should be urged to make arrangements for the extension of this branch of trade in the forthcoming season. His Majesty's Secretary of State for India asked for the views of the Government of India on the subject and enquired whether any action was proposed with a view to exerting pressure on the local Shaikhs.

The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf stated that sufficient credit had not been allowed to the important connection which Messrs. Gray, Paul & Co. had always had with this trade. They were the first European firm to take it up, long before Mr. Wonckhaus came to the Gulf, and had not in any way reduced their operations. It was true a Mr. Wonckhaus, who migrated from East Africa to Lingah in 1897 or 1898, had been enabled, by the absence of close competition there, to build up the small but prosperous business in shell export, and enabled him four years later to extend his operations to Bahrain and enter into competition with Messrs. Gray, Paul on their own ground. The latter firm, however, had not slackened their energies and expressed the utmost confidence in their ability to hold their own in Bahrain. In regard to Lingah, however, Mr. Wonckhaus had it all his own way from the beginning. Messrs. Gray, Paul's

reason for refraining at the start from competing with him at that port was that in their opinion a satisfactory agency there could not be managed by a native representative, and that the trade to be done there, whether in shells or other commodities, was not sufficient to warrant the expense of deputing a European. The urgency of better representation had been hitherto pressed upon them repeatedly without avail, but they intended immediately to send one of their superior staff there as an experimental measure, who would also have the Trucial Coast in his charge.

As regards the obstructive or constructive means to be employed for developing the trade, Major Cox was of opinion that, beyond doubt, if the demand could be created, the export of shells was capable of great expansion; but past experience of the demand, which had fluctuated considerably, seemed to indicate that it was not likely to develop much greater proportions unless the Australian trade failed. The object was therefore not so much to increase British operations by opening new channels, as to wrest some of the present volume of trade from German hands.

As an obstructive measure Major Cox stated that he had not overlooked the possibility of exerting his influence upon the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast with the object of throwing the trade into British hands, and that a warning in this sense had been given to them some time ago. As soon as the Abu Musa question had ceased to be acute, he intended to do what more was possible in the matter, but he was not sanguine of a speedy result, the Shaikhs being very backward, thick-witted and unbusinesslike. He was of opinion that anything in the shape of a grant to a British merchant or merchants of a monopoly of purchase, would be unworkable, either on shore or at the pearl banks, but that it seemed a feasible course that the Trucial Chiefs should severally arrogate to themselves the exclusive right of purchasing shells from their own subjects and should then be influenced to sell only to approved persons. He promised to take an early opportunity of sounding the Shaikhs on the subject generally, and to submit a further report.

The following constructive measures had been suggested for consideration :—

- (i) To press the British India Steam Navigation Company to give British shippers of shells to Bombay and Hamburg by their steamers liberal preferential rates.
- (ii) For Government to grant a rebate to British firms of 2s. 6d. per ton of shells shipped to Europe or of such a less sum as would enable them to compete with Messrs. Wonnekhaus, on equal or slightly better terms, either at Bahrain or Lingah.
- (iii) The transfer of purchase from the shore to the pearl banks and the lightering of shells from the boats at the banks, either by dhow or steam lighter.
- (iv) The import to Bahrain and elsewhere, if necessary, of some simple machinery for cutting the pearl shells into discs, in order to save space and freight.
- (v) To endeavour to promote a pearl button factory in England in order to attract the trade to London. At present the manufacture of buttons seemed to be confined to Germany and Austria.
- (vi) The institution of a small free British port at Bassidu or better still at Abu Musa, if it could be bought from the Shaikh of Shargah.

Messrs. Gray, Paul's late Agent at Bahrain had spent some time in Hamburg studying the shell question, and Major Cox had suggested that, on his return, the Agents at Bushire, Bahrain, and the member of the firm above mentioned should meet in consultation, and try and work out a plan of campaign.

Messrs. Gray, Paul, the English firm most interested in this trade, subsequently informed Major Cox that they were anxious to develop their shell interests in the Gulf not only for their own sake, but also to limit the threatened expansion of the German trade. The firm was of opinion that they could not trade safely or profitably on the lines now followed by the German firm either

in buying pearls from the dhows on the pearl banks or in giving large advances to native middlemen to purchase shells for them. A new representative had been appointed by the firm at Lingah, who was expected to arrive at Debai for the purpose of examining this branch of the trade on the spot and reporting to his principals on the possibilities of further successful enterprise. Major Cox himself talked over the problem with the Trucial Shaikhs individually and reported that no system of monopoly appeared to be workable in practice owing to the difficulty of enforcing it. The existing position was that promiscuous Persian boats came over from time to time from the Lingah coast and bought up any shells that were found accumulated. Although the presumption was that they were working for or in association with Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co.'s Lingah Agent, yet there were no outward indications that such was the case. The Shaikhs explained that it would not be worth their while to handle the shells themselves except in pursuance of some specific arrangement with an English firm. They assured Major Cox that, if Messrs. Gray, Paul's Agent at Debai or any one else representing a British firm was anxious to purchase shells and ready to pay as good a price as anyone else, they were prepared to ensure that they should have the first refusal. The circumstances of competition on the spot were outwardly fair, Wonckhaus having no local facilities for obtaining the shells which British firms had not; but the British firms averred that the Germans must be in receipt of strong Government support in the shape of rebates or subsidies sufficient to enable them to buy on terms on which Messrs. Gray, Paul could not trade profitably. It was stated that the entry of another British firm, such as Messrs. Lynch, into the lists would not be welcome to Messrs. Gray, Paul as the effect would be to increase the rate of purchase for everybody and in the absence of subsidies would not put the German firm in difficulties. It appeared that the only way this firm could be assisted was by a subsidy in one form or another which would enable them to place one of their best English Agents at Lingah and to pay better prices than Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. Major Cox suggested that the Directors of the British India Steam Navigation Company and Messrs. Gray, Paul in London should be approached by His Majesty's Government if anything in the direction of subsidies was considered feasible.

There seems every reason to believe that Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. are either in receipt of a Government subsidy or profit by some arrangement with the German Government which offers them a reasonable guarantee against loss. In the circumstances it is evidently uphill work for the British firm unaided to maintain its position.

On the 21st July 1908, the Secretary of State for India was informed that the Government of India considered that the question of putting pressure on the Shaikhs, as circumstances necessitated, could be left to Major Cox's discretion and they concurred in the view that direct interference to obtain a British monopoly was undesirable. His Majesty's Government agreed with these views, and Major Cox was informed accordingly.

Connected with the question of the German mother-of-pearl trade was that of

(3) *Flying of the German flag by native dhows at Lingah.*

the flying of the German flag by native boats engaged in the industry. In December 1907, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported that three native dhows, which had their head-quarters at Lingah, were sailing under the German flag. They were owned by a native of Kangoon on the Persian coast, who was residing at Lingah and were engaged on behalf of the German firm of Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. in the mother-of-pearl trade. The firm held mortgages on two of his boats. He possessed informal certificates, signed on behalf of Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. by Mr. Brown, which stated that the boats belonged to the German firm and that they were therefore allowed to sail under the German flag. As the use of the flag seemed to contravene the rules laid down in Articles XXX to XLI of the General Act of Brussels, Major Cox enquired whether any special action was intended, either through the Persian authorities or direct, in the way of challenging the right of these vessels to fly the flag. He suggested that, if a communication to the German Government was contemplated, it would be advisable, in the first instance, that he should endeavour to ascertain for certain that no unauthorized British flags were being flown

by native craft in those waters. He was instructed to make the necessary enquiries, and the matter was reported to the Secretary of State.

In March 1908, the Secretary of State directed that no complaint in the matter should be made locally, and on the 30th of the following month he telegraphed that, if enquiry at the International Bureau at Brussels showed that papers had not been deposited there in accordance with Article XLI of the General Act, His Majesty's Government were prepared to bring the matter to the notice of the German Government. He added that no action would be practicable unless Major Cox could certify that no unauthorised British flag was being used in those waters.

In May, Major Cox reported that enquiries, which had been made, furnished no grounds for supposing that non-British vessels were flying the British flag. It appeared, however, that strict adherence was not always given to the rules laid down in the Act for the acquisition and renewal of certificates, and the attention of British subjects was being drawn to the rule on the subject. Major Cox accordingly recommended that further steps should be postponed for a few weeks.

In June the Political Resident brought to notice a few cases in which British subjects were flying the British flag without having first obtained certificates or having failed to renew them regularly. Major Cox stated that these particular cases were being looked into, and that he had directed the out-agencies to take steps to remind British subjects within their jurisdiction of the necessity of close adherence to the rules regulating the use of the flag. He had also asked the Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division, to arrange for the subsidised ships when cruising in those waters to take opportunities of examining the papers of any native craft met with under the British flag, which were clearly not Indian and to see that they were in order. Major Cox left it to Government to decide whether action should be taken in the matter of the German flag, or whether it would be better to wait for a time before taking that step. The Secretary of State was informed that, in the circumstances explained, the Government of India were of opinion that it would be better to defer the proposed representation to the German Government for the present.

In a letter from the India Office to the Foreign Office, dated the 22nd July, it was stated that the Secretary of State for India was of opinion that no action should be taken to challenge the right of the dhows in question to fly the German flag till the Government of India reported that the use of the British flag by native dhows had been regularised. Major Cox was asked to submit a further report when this was known. The matter is not dealt with in the period of this summary.

At the end of October 1909, Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. were reported to be endeavouring to secure the contract for the agency of the Société du Tombac in the interests of German shipping. The term of the agency, which was held by the Russian Steamer Agent at Bushire, would expire in three or four months, and the Society, it was reported, was not renewing the Russian Agent's contract. Major Trevor stated that it would be desirable to have preference given to an English Company and suggested that the Embassy at Constantinople might be requested to promote the interests of a British Company, as Englishmen were believed to be connected with the management of the Society in Constantinople. Steps were accordingly taken by His Majesty's Government, at the instance of the British Minister at Tehran, to move the Russian Government to try and secure the re-appointment of the Russian Agent, or, failing that, for the appointment of a British Agent. The Russian Government acted as desired; and nothing further was heard of the matter.

On the strength of a report in the Press that the German Embassy had made verbal overtures to the Porte for the purchase or lease of the island of Halul off the coast of Katr for the purpose of a coaling station, the Government of India directed Major Cox on 5th July 1906 to visit the locality and to make cautious enquiries as to the status of the island, which, as lying off the pearl banks and being in the vicinity of intermittent submarine petroleum springs, was regarded as an important position. Major Cox

(4) *Agency of the société du Tombac.*

(5) *Rumoured designs by Germany on Halul Island.*



reported that the anchorage was better than it appeared to be from the description given in the Persian Gulf Pilot, and that though there was no water, the island was not unsuitable for a coaling station. The enquiries made elicited the fact that the island was resorted to occasionally by the boats of Bahrain, Doha, and Abu Thabi, but that no Shaikh apparently claimed exclusive ownership over it. The Government of India reported these facts to the Secretary of State (August 22, 1906) and suggested that, though the German newspapers disclaimed any intention of acquiring the island, the opportunity might be taken to inform the German Government that this and all the islands between the north points of Katr and Musandim were regarded as being outside the Turkish dominions, and that the British Government being charged with the duty of policing the pearl banks, would not approve any alteration of the *status quo* as regards these islands, which might adversely affect our local arrangements. They added that should an attempt be made to occupy the island, perhaps the Naval Commander-in-Chief might be instructed to take the necessary measures to forestall this, but that the suggested representation would probably be sufficient to prevent any necessity for direct action on the spot.

The Lords of the Admiralty reported (November 13, 1906) to the Foreign Office that they had no information respecting the political status of Halul Island, but that it appeared to them that no coaling station was likely to be established by any one on an exposed island, with no harbour and no water, and where the conditions of weather were such that sudden shifts of wind to a direction opposite to where it had been blowing were by no means unlikely.

(6) *Anti-British attitude of the German Vice-Consulate at Bushire during the Nationalists disturbances in 1909.* During the Nationalist disturbances in Bushire which led to the landing of a British Naval detachment and the subsequent arrest by the Darya Begi of the most prominent of the ringleaders, Saiyid Murtaza Ahrami, circumstances arose

which threw suspicion on the attitude which the German Vice-Consulate had maintained towards the Saiyid. In June, Major Cox, who had, under instructions from the Tehran Legation, investigated the matter, submitted a report which implicated the German Mirza in an intrigue to help the Saiyid to attain the latter's ends and to injure British influence. The Mirza, Abdul Hussain, was an intimate friend of Saiyid Murtaza and the report established that it was the advice of the Mirza that had guided the Saiyid in his actions, and that the guarantee, which the Saiyid had asked should be given by the Residency through the German-Vice Consulate, for the withdrawal of the sailors, had been suggested to him by the Mirza. Some of the Persian employés of the German firm of Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co. were also implicated in questionable relation with the Saiyid. Evidence was produced to show that Mirza Abdul Hussain had set afloat a rumour that a German warship was coming to Bushire in order to counteract the effect of British Naval action. It was also demonstrated that the Mirza was a member of a clique which was engaged in the smuggling of dutiable goods and arms in which latter Abdul Hussain was a large dealer.

The conduct of the Mirza was brought to the notice of the German Government. But the Acting German Consul denied that any interference in political affairs had been attempted by his Consulate, and in view of the absence of definite proof of such interference, the matter was allowed to drop.

(7) *Lease of a corn wharf to Messrs. Wonckhaus and Company.* In November 1907, the Resident in the Gulf reported that a space on the river bank, just below the town of Mohammerah, had been leased to Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co. as a corn wharf for eight years, at the end of which period, if the ground were not required, the firm had the right of renewal of the lease at rent offered by others.

(8) *German line of steamships in the Gulf.—Agency of the Hamburg-American line.* On 1st September 1906, Major Cox reported that Mr. Eisenhut, the German representative of Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co. at Bahrain, had asked permission from Shaikh Esa to put up a flagstaff and fly a flag on it whenever a German steamer might be in port. He informed Captain Prideaux that he

eventually wished to fly the flag of the Hamburg-American line. The Shaikh replied to Mr. Eisenhut declining to accede to the request, and the latter thereupon sought Captain Prideaux's assistance. Major Cox was instructed to inform the Shaikh through Captain Prideaux, that the course adopted by him was approved by the Government of India. Captain Prideaux was, however, to suggest to the Shaikh, in the way of friendly advice, that in future he would do well to consult the Political Officer before giving replies to commercial and other nationals of Foreign Powers.

The *Canadia* of the Hamburg-American line, the first vessel of this line to visit Basrah, arrived in that port on the 5th September 1906. She sailed from Hamburg on the 16th July, and took cargo from Antwerp, Marseilles, and Suez, completing her full burden of 3,500 tons. Her general cargo consisted principally of glass, liquor, iron, chinaware, and wood. She landed some arms and ammunition at Maskat and took from Basrah 1,300 tons of unhusked rice for Hamburg and Rotterdam, and about 1,600 tons of dates for transshipment at Hamburg to New York, and sundries. She shipped 2,000 packages at Bushire at the rate of 25s. per ton of 8 cwts. The *Canadia* was followed by the *Sicilia* which arrived shortly after, and booked a full return cargo. The service from Hamburg to Basrah was a monthly one, the vessels calling at Antwerp, Marseilles, Port Said, Suez, Port Soudan, Jibuti, Maskat, Lingah, Bushire, Bahrain and Mohammerah. Other steamers employed were the *Assyria* and the *Savona*. Outward freight was booked at from 20s. to 22s. 6d. per ton, and homeward freight at 17s. 6d. per ton.

On the 17th February 1908, the Political Resident in Turkish Arabia reported that he had received a visit from Mr. Faust Laurion, who described himself as an Austrian, naturalised in England, and as a Director of the West Hartlepool line of steamers. Mr. Laurion stated that, according to his calculations, the Hamburg-American line must be losing about £20,000 a year on the Persian Gulf service.

So much for the various concrete instances of German activity in the Gulf. General measures for the consolidation of British influence in the Gulf region. Attention may now be turned to the measures taken by the Imperial and Indian Governments for the consolidation of British and the nullification of foreign influence in the Gulf region generally.

At the time of Lord Minto's arrival in India, the position at Henjam was assuming a somewhat critical aspect, owing to the encroachments of the Persian officials by the construction of buildings and erection of flagstaffs in close and undesirable proximity to the British telegraph buildings.

Proposals in regard to a settlement of the question had been made to the Legation and to His Majesty's Secretary of State, whose views on the matter will be seen from the following extract from a telegram which was communicated to the Political Resident, Persian Gulf, on the 1st December 1905 :—

“ Any arrangement which would tend to create British *enclave* in island would certainly be opposed by Persian Government and His Majesty's Government are of opinion that show of force, even if effectual, would be of doubtful expediency. They, therefore, consider that further efforts should be made to settle the matter locally at Bushire, but if amenities of telegraph station are seriously affected by Persian encroachments, instructions to protest will be sent to Mr. Grant-Duff.

Negotiations followed and continued until the end of February 1906. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh pointed out that in the original grant of the telegraph concession there was no mention of a land concession, and insisted that the Persian Government could only recognise our right to the houses actually mentioned in the original concession of 1868 ; and that, if His Majesty's Government desired land on Henjam, the Shah must be asked in the usual manner for a grant.

In March 1906, in virtue of an Agreement between the Director, Persian Gulf Telegraphs, and the Belgian Director of Persian Customs, Bandar Abbas, the



erection of a Persian Customs House was commenced on Henjam. This action caused great excitement among the Arab population on the island, who feared an attack on their independence; and grave fears were entertained for the safety of the British telegraph staff. H. M. S. *Fox* was therefore sent to Henjam by the Resident in the Gulf; and Mr. Grant-Duff called on the Persian Government to cause the work to be suspended.

On 4th April, building was stopped, and the Persian officials left the island. Meanwhile M. Stas, the Director of Customs, Bandar Abbas, had collected a small force of men to land at Henjam for the purpose of supporting the Persian officials, and a party of 24, of whom 13 were armed tofangchis, actually arrived, but were prevented from landing within the telegraph concession by the Commander of H. M. S. *Fox*; two subordinates of the Russian Consul at Bandar Abbas also arrived at Henjam, but as they gave a false account of themselves, they were sent back to our Naval authorities, who stated that they could not be responsible for their safety. The action of M. Stas called forth a renewed protest to the Mushir-ed Dowleh, and on the 17th April the Customs were ordered to desist from further action.

When the Resident sent H. M. S. *Fox* to Henjam, as above related, the Government of India instructed him that it was undesirable that British ships should be employed to coerce the Arabs on Henjam, or that, pending a settlement of matters by negotiation, Persian gunboats should be allowed to do this; the Commander of H. M. S. *Fox* might, however, be instructed to protect Persian employes from Arabs and to give them, in case of necessity, a safe passage to Bandar Abbas. These orders were approved by His Majesty's Government.

In regard to the turn events had taken on Henjam, Lord Minto's Government informed the Secretary of State that in their view the Persian Government should be dissuaded from any attempt to alter the existing status on Henjam or to extend authority over or levy customs or taxes from Arabs occupying the island beyond the limits of the telegraph concession. They had not done so hitherto, and it should be sufficient that the Persian flag had been hoisted, and a Customs post built within the limits of the telegraph station area. If the Arabs were assured that the Persian Government would not interfere with their existing autonomy, the present excitement would probably subside. It was possible that a quarantine station might be located on Henjam, and as the only possible site for it would be within British limits, it would be most desirable to keep the whole of the present area in British hands and so ensure actual control of the quarantine station by British officers. They added that this further fact indicated the necessity for maintaining our position on Henjam.

As regards the determination of the limits of the telegraph area, the reason for which His Majesty's Government desired exclusive rights over the telegraph concession as it had existed from 1868 to 1880 were carefully explained to the Persian Government, and it was also intimated to them that His Majesty's Government would have no objection to making a formal application for the concession, provided that it was understood that it would be favourably received. No reply was received, but in conversation the Mushir-ed-Dowleh stated that the Shah could not alienate so much territory to Great Britain without arousing some demand on the part of Russia for a similar concession in the north. When the first demand was made by Mr Grant-Duff the area was estimated to be some 3·4 square miles, but a more accurate survey by the Naval authorities in the Gulf demonstrated that the area was only 1,200 acres or something less than 2 square miles. This, too, was explained to the Persian Government. A map of the concession was compiled by the Senior Naval Officer in the Gulf, and a copy was sent to Tehran; the Government of India also invited the opinion of the Naval Commander-in-Chief, who had recently visited the Gulf, as to whether in his opinion any portion of the concession could be given up; in reply the Naval Commander-in-Chief stated that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty desired him to inform the Government of India that as Henjam is an important strategical position, which, under certain circumstances, would be particularly useful as a telegraph station, they considered that as little as possible of the island should be surrendered.

The Henjam incident excited a certain amount of interest at St. Petersburg. On the 23rd April, Mr. Spring-Rice telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey that he had received an unofficial verbal message from Count Lamsdorff to the effect that, according to reports received, a British gunboat had been sent to protect the Arabs against Persia, whose sovereignty they questioned, and that the British Government was putting impediments in the way of the construction of a Persian Customs House on Henjam. Mr. Spring-Rice stated that he proposed to reply as follows :—

- (1) That the gunboat had been sent to protect British subjects in case of disorder arising in consequence of measures threatened by the Persian authorities against the Arabs.
- (2) That negotiations were proceeding in order to settle the limits of the telegraph station which the Persians were disputing although the land had been occupied for 12 years without protest, and that there was no intention of interfering with the Persian Customs administration or Persian sovereignty.

This proposed reply was approved.

In regard to the establishment of a Customs post on Henjam, the Political Resident, Bushire, reported subsequently that one Abdul Mohsin, an Arab, and the grandson of a naturalised British subject of Bombay, had arrived at Henjam. He had been sent by the Director of Customs at Lingah under instructions from the Director-General of Customs, Bushire, to establish a Customs bureau in Henjam. The Director-General apparently believed that, as the man was an Arab, he would succeed in gaining the good will of the Arab inhabitants of Henjam, and removing the present opposition to the establishment of a Customs post there. Nothing further has since been heard of the matter.

In October 1908 the Government of India telegraphed to His Majesty's Secretary of State, concurring in Mr. Marling's recommendation that the status of the British Vice-Consulate at Ahwaz should be raised to that of a Consulate consequent on Mr. Gratama, a Dutch merchant at Ahwaz, having been appointed Honorary Consul at that port.

On the 18th November the Secretary of State replied that a Commission antedated the 1st May would be granted to Captain Lorimer, giving him the local rank of Consul at Ahwaz.

The deficiency of the knowledge possessed by the Government of India as to the routes mainly followed by the caravans carrying arms, influenced them to seize the opportunity of a vacancy in the Vice-Consulship at Bam, caused by the death of Khan Bahadur Asghar Ali Beg, to depute a British officer temporarily for a period of six months to that place with the object of (a) coping, as far as possible, with the arms traffic through Persian Baluchistan, (b) endeavouring to put a check on the growing insecurity of the Bandar Abbas-Kerman trade route and (c) effecting what was possible in the enhancement of British trade in Bam-Narmashir, having regard to the suggestions contained in the report of the British Indian Commercial Mission of 1904-05 to South-East Persia, and to tour between Minab and Regan, with a view to the improvement of communications in that district. The Secretary of State sanctioned the proposal in January 1906, and the period of deputation was subsequently extended till the end of April 1907. Lieutenant Ogilvie's reports placed the Government of India in possession of much useful information regarding the general routes used by arms caravans, but it was ascertained that Bam was not a coign of vantage from which to check the smuggling trade; and as there would possibly be objections from Persia to a British officer being stationed at Bampur, which was more suitable for the main object in view, the Government of India decided not to ask at present for the appointment of an European officer at Bam.

In view of German commercial activity in the vicinity of Lingah it was considered desirable to establish a British Vice-Consulate at that place. The intention originally was that the post should be filled by an officer of the Levant Consular service; but as no officer of that service

(4) *Establishment of Vice-Consulate at Lingah.*

was available, Mr. R. H. New, a member of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, was appointed in March 1910 as the first British Vice-Consul with the sanction of the Secretary of State. The Vice-Consul, Lingah, has also been entrusted with the duties of protecting British interests at Debai.

At the instance of His Majesty's Government the Kermanshah Consulate, previously held by an officer of the Government of India, was exchanged for the Consulate at Mohammerah, a post under the control of the London Foreign Office, Mr. McDouall, the Consul at Mohammerah, being transferred to Kermanshah, and Lieutenant Wilson, an officer of the Government of India, being appointed as Consul at Mohammerah in July 1909.

(5) *Consular arrangements at Kermanshah and Mohammerah.* The Sanitary Convention of Paris, 1903, had provided for the establishment of an international sanitary station at Ormuz as a measure calculated to prevent the spread of plague and cholera from the Persian Gulf. But as His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the necessity for the scheme was extremely doubtful, the climate of Ormuz being unfavourable and the establishment of an international station at the entrance to the Gulf inexpedient on political grounds, the British delegates only signed the convention subject to certain reservations which in effect would indefinitely postpone the creation of the sanitary station. The Persian Government on the other hand preferred Henjam to Ormuz as a site for the station, and the French Government deputed Dr. Faivre of the French Ministry of the Interior to the Persian Gulf in order to make enquiries on the spot. In these circumstances, the Marquess of Lansdowne considered it desirable that His Majesty's Government should be in possession of information from a source independent of the French Government, and accordingly deputed Dr. Theodore Thomson of the Local Government Board to the Persian Gulf to report on the sanitary requirements of those regions as well as on the question of the need of a sanitary station and the suitability of Ormuz, Henjam or other sites for the purpose.

The existing sanitary arrangements in the Gulf had been instituted in 1897, when the Persian Government, following on the outbreak of bubonic plague in India in 1896, delegated sanitary powers in respect of the whole Persian coast to the British Residency Surgeon at Bushire, and consented that British medical subordinates should be placed in sanitary charge of the ports of Mohammerah, Bushire, Lingah, Bandar Abbas and Jask. This was an event of great political importance to Great Britain in respect of her position in the Persian Gulf region and it was subsequently enhanced by the introduction of sanitary systems, under British advice, at Bahrain, Maskat and Kuwait.

Before proceeding to the Gulf, Dr. Thomson visited Calcutta on the 6th February 1906 and interviewed the Foreign Secretary. The views of the Government of India on the question of quarantine arrangements and on the political situation on the shores and islands of the Persian Gulf were explained to him. It was pointed out that any change in the existing arrangements was likely to be to our prejudice, both commercially and politically; that neither the Shah nor the Porte desired any sanitary protection; and that precautions in the Gulf were not likely to have any practical effect on the health of Europe.

The R. I. M. S. *Lawrence* was placed at Dr. Thomson's disposal for conducting the local investigation which he did in the company of Dr. Condon, the Bushire Residency Surgeon.

On the 14th July 1906 Dr. Thomson submitted to Sir Edward Grey his report on the question of the sanitary defence of the Persian Gulf. Dr. Thomson combated the theory that the Persian Gulf was one of the natural highways for the dissemination of plague and cholera from India to Europe. He showed the unsuitability of either Henjam, Ormuz, or Kishm for a sanitary station, as well as the uselessness of any such establishment at the entrance of the Persian Gulf. In his opinion, the creation of such a station would entail heavy cost for construction and maintenance; there would be grave peril to the health and lives of the staff and of the persons detained in the station; it would prove seriously detrimental to commerce in the Gulf; and it would entirely fail to secure protection against

plague and cholera. He maintained that danger from the Arabian side of the Gulfs of Persia and Oman below Kuwait was a negligible quantity, and that on the Persian side was small and was sufficiently provided against. He concluded that the line of penetration of plague or cholera most to be apprehended was through Basrah, Mohammerah and Kuwait, and that measures of sanitary defence should be concentrated at the northern extremity of the Gulf. The scheme best calculated, therefore, to secure a responsible degree of protection to Europe and a minimum of interference with commercial interests would in his opinion consist in the perfecting of the existing sanitary stations at Mohammerah and Bushire, the establishment of a sanitary station at Kuwait and the creation of a new station in place of that now existing at Basrah.

The Persian Government had in the meantime proposed that a sanitary station should be established at Henjam at their expense, and the French Government had desired to amend the Paris Sanitary Convention by substituting that place for Ormuz, an arrangement which would defeat the object of the British reservations subject to which the Convention had been signed. His Majesty's Government therefore communicated to the French Government an abridged report by Dr. Thomson, summarising his conclusions, and suggested the amendment of the Convention by the exclusion of the provisions relating to the establishment of a sanitary station at the entrance of the Persian Gulf.

In reply to the suggestion made by His Majesty's Government, M. Cambon stated (on September 26, 1906) that the French Government did not see their way to a modification of the text of the Convention, but suggested that His Majesty's Government should sign the *procès-verbal* of the deposit of ratifications reserving the power subsequently to formulate a specific amendment with the object of modifying the original text, the amendment being then submitted to the signatory Powers through the French Government. His Majesty's Government accepted this proposal and instructed the British Ambassador in Paris to sign the *procès-verbal*.

The French Government having at the same time informed the Persian Government of the British objections to the establishment of a sanitary station at Henjam, M. Schneider, the President of the Tehran Sanitary Council, to whom the French note had been sent by the Shah's Government for observations, suggested to Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, British Minister at Tehran, that it would facilitate the abandonment of the project to establish an observation station at Henjam if the Indian Government consented to improve at their own cost the quarantine arrangements at the Persian ports of Mohammerah, Bushire, Lingah, Bandar Abbas, and Jask. His Majesty's Government having called for the views of the Government of India on this suggestion, the latter expressed their willingness to carry out the recommendations made by Dr. Thomson for the improvement of the quarantine arrangements at the five Persian ports and to bear for the present the cost of supplying disinfecting apparatus, reserving the right of subsequent recovery of the cost from the Persian Government. It was understood that His Majesty's Government would bear a moiety of the cost involved.

Subsequently, in April 1907, the Government of India were informed that the *procès-verbal* of the deposit of ratifications of the Paris Sanitary Convention of 1903, had been signed on the 30th March 1907; and they thereupon asked the British Minister at Tehran to ascertain what increased annual maintenance charges would be entailed by the new quarantine measures which the President of the Sanitary Council, Tehran, had declared to be necessary, and also by such increase in the European personnel as would be required. The Minister was also asked what approximately would be the initial cost of appliances for disinfecting merchandise and for killing rats which the President had suggested should be provided at Mohammerah, Bandar Abbas, Bushire, Lingah and Jask.

The Minister at Tehran replied (May 14) that the President, Sanitary Council, had furnished him with a memorandum in which he suggested that another stove should be located at Bushire and one each at Mohammerah, Lingah, Jask and Bandar Abbas. The President also considered the provision of Clayton apparatus to be necessary, and asked that English doctors might be located at all the ports. The total cost of these measures for the first year was put at £4,000 and for subsequent years at £2,000.

On this the Secretary of State was informed that the Government of India were willing to agree at once to the provision of additional stoves at Bandar Abbas and Bushire as a temporary measure at the joint expense of Indian and Home revenues, pending further discussion of the whole question. As regards the additional doctors they did not know what agency the Sanitary Council considered necessary, and they awaited receipt of the memorandum by the President of the Sanitary Council.

The Minister at Tehran now reported that the Committee of the Sanitary Council were in favour of an extended scheme including the sanitary stations at Bandar Abbas, Bushire, Mohammerah, Jask, Lingah and Ahwaz, under an European doctor with free powers of inspection. Further, that the Russian doctor had proposed that the sanitary service should be managed in 'strict collaboration with the Customs' and that the five small steamers recently acquired by the Customs authorities should be used; also that the French doctor at the Russian Consulate, Bushire, should be made Inspector-General of quarantine in the Gulf.

The Minister pointed out that our offer was being used by Russia as an opportunity for attacking the arrangements of 1896. He suggested that the improvements which were absolutely essential might perhaps be made by the British Government and that the matter might then be allowed to drop. He hoped that this could be managed through the French Government.

Upon receipt of this information the Government of India telegraphed to the Secretary of State that they were fully prepared to provide for such improvement in the quarantine as might be considered essential by Doctor Thomson pending a consideration of the Sanitary Council's scheme which had not yet been received. They trusted that a strong protest would be made by His Majesty's Government against the proposal of the Russian doctor affecting British control which had been made at the very time when Russia was ostensibly considering the possibility of promising not to interfere with that control.

This led to the delivery of an intimation to the Russian Ambassador in London that the British Government considered the present quarantine arrangements as one of their special interests in the Persian Gulf and a part of the *status quo*. M. Isvolsky had stated in an *aide-memoire* that the Russian Government did not deny the special interests of Great Britain in the Gulf region, and His Majesty's Government therefore trusted that the Russian Government would instruct their doctor at Tehran to refrain from opposing the present arrangements, should the question come again before the Council. The Russian Ambassador was also told that the British Government proposed themselves to make such improvements in the service as were indispensable.

Immediately after this the British Minister at Tehran reported that he had arranged with the President of the Sanitary Council that the matter should be dropped, and that the Russian Minister had given an assurance that the Russian doctor's proposal had been made without his knowledge.

On the 10th September, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India telegraphed that, as the Russian Government had been informed that His Majesty's Government proposed themselves to make indispensable sanitary improvements, it was considered inadvisable to let the matter drop. His Majesty's Government therefore proposed gradually to proceed with the reforms which might be indispensable for protection against plague after the question of the cost had been settled. Sir C. Spring-Rice had, in the meanwhile, informed the Government of India that the Sanitary Council had recommended the provision of stoves with mechanics at Bandar Abbas and Mohammerah and of a portable Clayton apparatus at Bushire. They had also suggested that a mobile Medical Officer of the Indian Medical Service with three Assistants should be appointed to assist Captain Williams at Bushire, and that an Assistant should be appointed at each of the sanitary stations. Sir C. Spring-Rice had heard privately also that the Council would be glad if the Government of India provided a stove for immediate use at Bahrain.

The Government of India accordingly informed His Majesty's Government that the total cost of what was understood to be required would be £2,250 initial, and £1,101 recurring; and that if the Home Government would bear half the cost

the Government of India would be willing to introduce the desired reforms immediately. The Secretary of State approved (November 7, 1907) the proposals, and consented to bear half the cost of them; and steps were accordingly taken to give effect to them.

The post of Mobile Assistant was created in October 1907 in connection with the reform of quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf and as the outcome of a proposal of the Sanitary Council of Persia that there should be an officer of the Indian Medical Service to assist the Residency Surgeon and Chief Quarantine Officer in the Persian Gulf. The pay of the appointment was fixed at Rs. 500 a month *plus* a local allowance of Rs. 200 a month, and the cost was to be equally divisible between the Home and Indian Governments. The appointment was not on the regular medical cadre of the Foreign Department.

In October 1908 the Residency Surgeon represented that the appointment, under existing conditions, had no attractions for medical officers, and that it would be very difficult to get any one to fill the appointment in future. It was, therefore, proposed (a) that the appointment should be placed on the medical cadre, (b) that, owing to lack of professional work, and in consideration of the trying climate of Bandar Abbas where the Mobile Assistant was located, the tenure of the appointment should ordinarily be made for one year, and (c) that at the discretion of the Political Resident the Mobile Assistant should be allowed to recess at Karachi for two months every year in the hot weather.

In view of the Secretary of State's decision that there should be no further increase of the civil cadre of the Indian Medical Service it was decided that proposal (a) could not be sanctioned. and that, if necessary, the appointment should be filled by a private practitioner recruited by the Secretary of State; as regards (b) the Government of India saw no necessity at the time to fix any definite period for the tenure of the appointment; as regards (c), there was no objection, subject to the concurrence of the President of the Sanitary Council, Tehran, which should be obtained on each occasion.

The then incumbent, Captain White, having at the same time applied for and been granted a year's combined leave, the matter was held in abeyance, and the Political Resident was informed that no officer was available to replace Captain White, and that endeavours would be made to engage a doctor from England, and that meanwhile arrangements must be made locally for the performance of Captain White's duties unless the Political Resident could suggest any alternative.

In April 1909 the Political Resident enquired whether, in future, instead of employing a whole-time medical officer as Mobile Assistant, a medical officer in military employ could not be sent to the Gulf temporarily during the duration of an epidemic. This had originally been suggested at a seance of the Sanitary Council in December 1907. The Political Resident was of opinion that an officer would rarely be required. The Director-General, Indian Medical Service, was of opinion that this was a case for the employment of a private practitioner, and was prepared to submit a nomination; but, owing to the necessity for reduction of expenditure in Persia, it was considered preferable to proceed with the suggestion made by the Political Resident. The matter was referred to the Secretary of State, who conveyed the concurrence of His Majesty's Government in the proposal.

A suggestion of the Political Resident, which had been received meanwhile, that the Consular Surgeon, Kermanshah, should be transferred to Mohammerah in view of the fact that that Consulate had been transferred to the Home Government in exchange for the Mohammerah Consulate, and that the Consular Surgeon should then be made *ex-officio* Mobile Assistant, was rejected on grounds of economy.

Following upon these general measures the subject of the improvement of

(7) *Quarantine arrangements at Kuwait.* the quarantine arrangements at Kuwait was taken up. In March 1908 the Resident in the Gulf reported that Major Knox, the Political Agent, Kuwait, had suggested that the Government of India should equip and maintain a quarantine establishment on the lines of those at other ports in the Persian Gulf, and that the island of Shweikh should be occupied for the quarantine station, the fishermen being compensated by a rent of Rs. 200 *per*



*ensem* and a sum of Rs. 25,000 being paid to Shaikh Mubarak as rent for the island and for certain other considerations. With regard to these suggestions the Political Resident expressed the opinion that the question of leasing Shweikh island on the terms proposed was quite distinct from the question of quarantine and should not be mixed up with it unless the Defence Committee saw any advantage in obtaining control of the island in this way. Major Cox considered that the Shaikh might reasonably be expected to permit the quarantine station to be placed on the island of Shweikh, free of charge, so long as the fishermen were placated, seeing that the institution of quarantine would really be advantageous to the people of Kuwait. As regards the sum of Rs. 200 *per mensem*, which it was proposed to distribute among the fishermen of the island, it was observed that, although the quarantine station of Bushire was on the island of Abbassek where certain Persians have fishery rights, no compensation had ever been paid to them. The fishermen were permitted to fish anywhere from boats, but were not allowed to land within a certain distance of the quarantine station. Major Cox considered that a similar arrangement might be feasible at Kuwait. He was also of opinion that suitable accommodation could be provided at a cost of about Rs. 8,000 initial expenditure and recurring charges amounting to some Rs. 3,000 *per annum*. He proposed that the quarantine fees to be charged should be approximately the same as those levied in Persian ports. The Shaikh was not particularly anxious to have quarantine, and it would be impossible to get him to pay the working expenses. In view, therefore, of the importance which His Majesty's Government attached to the establishment of British controlled quarantine throughout the Gulf, Major Cox urged that the Government of India should offer to take over the direct management of the Kuwait quarantine, and that it should be carried on as a charge on the Government revenues.

In June, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported that Major Knox had suggested an arrangement whereby the vessels of the British India Steam Navigation Company would carry on board a guard furnished at the expense of the Government of India. By this means quarantine could be enforced, as far as these vessels were concerned, with indifference to the wishes and attitude of the Shaikh. Major Knox, in two further reports, drew attention to the unsatisfactory attitude of Shaikh Mubarak in regard to the quarantine question, and suggested that he was purposely thwarting the plans of the British Government in regard to quarantine in order to compel them to give him a greater measure of assistance in resisting Turkish amenities in connection with his properties at Fao. As regards the action that could best be taken to bring the Shaikh to a more reasonable frame of mind in regard to his quarantine arrangements, Major Knox suggested a formal intimation to the Shaikh that the Government of India could not permit Kuwait to defy the world in general, that it would shortly formulate proposals for a proper system of quarantine to be managed by its own officers, and that, in the meanwhile, the fast mails would no longer call at Kuwait. Major Cox was inclined to think that to make an intimation to the Shaikh forthwith, in this sense might confirm him in his obstructive attitude and perhaps produce a deadlock. He intended addressing Shaikh Mubarak on the matter, and, if his reply was unsatisfactory, the effect of the suspension of the visits of the steamers of the British India Steam Navigation Company and the Bombay Persian line might be tried.

A further report from Major Cox showed that Shaikh Mubarak had complained that the Princes of Arabia objected to the quarantine restrictions imposed on their families and followers landing at Kuwait, and had indirectly intimated that, if the Government of India did not co-operate with him in the matter of his Fao properties, he could not be expected to defer to their wishes in regard to quarantine administration. Major Cox remarked that, while there was a measure of truth in the assertion that the Shaikh had to meet frequent demurs on the part of the Shaikhs of the interior whose families or followers were subjected to quarantine detention on arrival at Kuwait, his statement in this regard was doubtless much exaggerated. As the Shaikh of Kuwait had spontaneously asked the British India Steam Navigation Company to cease booking passengers to Kuwait by the fast mail steamers, Major Cox was of opinion that no need for any immediate action seemed to exist. As there was no epidemic in the Gulf itself and as the slow mails

were out of quarantine before they reached Kuwait, the Shaikh's solution of the difficulty would suffice for the time being, unsatisfactory though his attitude undoubtedly was. The prohibition put upon the British India Company's vessels was, however, subsequently withdrawn by the Shaikh.

In January 1909, the Political Agent at Kuwait again raised the question of introducing quarantine arrangements at Kuwait. He suggested that it was a simple matter for the Government of India to arrange that no passengers should be able to reach Kuwait from India in less than a fortnight, by directing that fast mail steamers of the British India Company should no longer call at Kuwait. After consultation with Major Cox, the Government of India authorized the Political Agent to inform the Shaikh personally that, as the Government of India had provided the Agent with a sea-going launch which could fetch mails from or communicate with Fao when necessary, they had little interest in the continuance of the call of the fast mail steamer at Kuwait; and that unless he (Shaikh Mubarak) had any strong grounds to urge for its continuance, they proposed to authorize the British India Steam Navigation Company to discontinue it. If, on the other hand, the Shaikh was anxious for the maintenance of the service, the Government of India would be prepared to reconsider the matter on learning his view; but he should understand that, in the event of its continuance, it would be necessary that he should agree to a more effective form of quarantine than had hitherto been applied.

In August 1909, Major Cox reported that the Shaikh had no objection to the discontinuance of the fast mail service as long as the Agent's steam-launch fetched the mails. It was accordingly decided to instruct the Managing Agents of the British India Steam Navigation Company to discontinue the call of the fast steamers until further notice, the mails for and from Kuwait being exchanged at Fao.

In April 1907, plague appeared at Bahrain, and in accordance with Article 46 of the Paris Sanitary Convention, the Political Resident was instructed to move the Shaikh to issue a proclamation prescribing inspection of intending passengers by the Agency Assistant Surgeon. A notification to this effect was issued by the Shaikh. Subsequently the Persian Government shewed a tendency to enforce excessive quarantine (14 days) on ships from Bahrain, but were persuaded to reduce the period to five days. The knowledge that plague existed at Bahrain appears to have seriously influenced the Tehran authorities, for in connection with the suggested reforms in the Persian quarantine arrangements the Sanitary Council suggested the provision of a stove at Bahrain in addition to the Persian ports concerned. The proposal was supported by the Chief Quarantine Officer, accepted by the Government of India, and ultimately approved by the Secretary of State. The quarantine arrangements were subsequently placed in the charge of the Assistant Surgeon attached to the Agency Surgeon Staff, having, in the first instance, been delegated to a military assistant surgeon, whose employment was subsequently found to be unnecessary. Later in the year it was found necessary to put the quarantine arrangements at Bahrain on a proper footing under direct British supervision. The requirements included accommodation for 1st, 2nd and 3rd class passengers and for the disinfection, stove, chemicals and a staff of quarantine guards, at an initial cost estimated at about Rs. 5,000 and a recurring cost of Rs. 2,664, per annum. The expenditure being justifiable in view of the political importance attached to British controlled quarantine in the Gulf the scheme was recommended to His Majesty's Secretary of State on the understanding that half the cost should be borne by His Majesty's Government. Sanction was accorded to the proposals in June 1909.

Towards the close of 1908 the Church Missionary Society decided to close their medical mission at Kerman. The medical charge of the staff of the Consulate and of the employés of the Indo-European Telegraph Department stationed at Kerman had been entrusted to the Mission doctor, and it thus became necessary to reconsider the question of medical arrangements. The Telegraph Department had found the previous arrangements unsatisfactory and desired to be independent of the Mission doctor. On their suggestion that the Consulate and the Telegraph



Department should combine in meeting the cost of a suitable medical officer, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf renewed a proposal put forward by him in 1906 for the appointment of a gazetted medical officer as consular surgeon. The total approximate annual cost involved by the creation of the proposed appointment was placed at Rs. 19,050, an excess of Rs. 18,450 over the cost of the previous arrangements. It was however suggested that the Indo-European Telegraph Department might be willing to contribute Rs. 3,000 per annum towards the increased cost. In March 1909, the Political Resident telegraphed that the Consul at Kerman had learnt that the Indo-European Telegraph Department were proposing to engage a military assistant surgeon, and that he (the Consul) strongly deprecated placing an officer of that class in medical charge of the Consulate. He held that if an officer of the Indian Medical Service could not be provided, it would be preferable for social and political reasons to retain the hospital assistant rather than engage an assistant surgeon. As an alternative, the Political Resident suggested that, as Kerman was now within the British sphere of influence, the location of a gazetted medical officer at Kerman was of more interest and importance to the Government of India than the retention of a similar officer at Kermanshah, and that the matter might be considered. In view of the general situation in Persia, however, it was decided that the latter proposal need not be considered and that the hospital assistant should hold charge at Kerman for the time being.

Subsequently, on the application of the Indo-European Telegraph Department for the services of a military assistant surgeon for Kerman, the appointment was sanctioned in January 1910 on the condition that the existing appointment of hospital assistant would at the same time be abolished and that the services of the assistant surgeon would be available for the Consulate.

On the 23rd of June 1907, Major Cox, with reference to German activity in the trade in red oxide in the Persian Gulf as illustrated by the Abu Musa case suggested the advisability of arranging for a visit to the various islands off the Arab coast by a geological expert with a view to ascertaining whether and what islands, other than Ormuz and Abu Musa, offered prospects for the successful mining of red-oxide. He mentioned the island of Dalma as containing considerable deposits, and thought, from the formation of the hills on Sir Beni Yas and Sir Bu Nuari, that they probably contained similar deposits.

He was informed, in reply, that the Government of India considered that, as the quantity of red oxide obtainable at Abu Musa and Ormuz was practically unlimited, further search in the Gulf was at present unnecessary. He was, however, requested to secure a large sample, about 2 maunds, of the average ore to be found on Dalma Island, if large deposits existed there, in order that an opinion as to its value might be procured. Major Cox was, at the same time, instructed to remind the Trucial Chiefs of the terms of clause 3 of the Protectorate Treaties of 1892, and to inform them that the grant of a concession of any sort to mine or otherwise exploit any portion of their territory was considered to fall within the scope of this clause.

In April 1908, one Haji Mirza Ali Asghar, son of Haji Ali Akbar of Manchester, wished to obtain from the Persian Government, in his personal capacity as a Persian subject, a concession for the extraction of red oxide on Sirri Island.

The Resident in the Gulf was of opinion that it would benefit British interests, if the concession although obtained by a Persian subject, were exploited by the British firm of Ali Akbar and Sons of Manchester. The grant of such a concession would, however, affect the question of the status of the island, Persian sovereignty over which had never been conceded by His Majesty's Government, who had always recognized the island as belonging to the Jowasmi Chiefs. The proposal when made known at home raised the question whether His Majesty's Government should permit the assertion by the Persian Government of any pretension to grant a concession in Sirri to pass without a protest, in view of the state of the controversy as to sovereignty over the island. Eventually in

September 1908, the Secretary of State instructed the British Minister at Tehran that should a concession be applied for, it would suffice if the Persian Government were informed that the controversy, as to the ownership of the island of Sirri, had not been reciprocally settled and that, should a concession be granted to an applicant not approved by His Majesty's Government, it would lead to an assertion of the claims of the Jowasmi Chiefs.

Subsequently, Haji Ali Akbar's Agent did apply to the Persian Government for a concession; and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran thereupon addressed the Persian Government in the sense ordered. But it does not appear that the matter was further proceeded with.

In October 1908, Messrs. Strick and Company asked the Persian Legation in London for a concession for mining rights on "all Persian islands except Ormuz"; and the British Minister at Tehran was informed of this, and instructed to consult the Resident in the Gulf and do what he properly could to assist Messrs. Strick and Co. in regard to Sirri and other Persian islands not already leased.

But difficulties now arose. The Muin-ut-Tujjar, a leading Persian banker, claimed to have a *firman* of 1904 granting him mining concessions in all the islands of the Persian Gulf. He certainly had a *firman* specifically conferring on him Ormuz, Larak, Bostaneh, Henjam and Kishm; in fact he had already been working the oxide mines in Ormuz for years; but no mention was made in the document of Sirri and the other islands on which Messrs. Strick & Co. desired concessions.

It does not appear that Messrs. Strick & Co.'s negotiations regarding Sirri, Farur, etc., were further pursued. In April 1909, the Resident in the Gulf reported that the employes of the Muin had operated on Farur and its littoral, and had excavated about 100 tons of oxide in Sirri. His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran reminded the Persian Government of the *caveat* by the British Government, stated that he was unable to recognize the Muin as the *Concessionaire*, and requested that measures should be taken to stop him from further operations on Sirri. Sir G. Barclay informed the Muin of the attitude of the British Government with regard to Sirri, and reminded him that he had given no proof of any rights as regards oxide in the Persian Gulf beyond those conferred by the *firman* granted to him in 1904 by the Persian Government. In reply, the Muin gave a promise to desist from mining operations in Sirri.

The attention of the red oxide business now seemed to be diverted to Ormuz, an island which, as already stated, was in the possession of the Muin-ut-Tujjar, who had hitherto been working the oxide mines on the island, through his Agents, Messrs. Ellinger, under contract with Messrs. Strick and Company. Messrs. Strick & Co.'s contract had expired; and with the object of preventing a foreign firm obtaining a concession from the Muin for Ormuz, endeavours were made to effect an agreement between Messrs. Ellinger and Company (the Muin's Agents) and Messrs. Strick and Company as it was found that the latter were really anxious to make a contract with the Muin; and Messrs. Ellinger and Company telegraphed to the Muin, on behalf of Messrs. Strick and Company, an offer for 20,000 tons, a contract for two-and-a-half years.

The Muin accepted Messrs. Strick and Co.'s offer, but stated that he would not answer for the quality of the oxide. There were 15,000 tons lying ready for shipment.

On the 25th August 1908 His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, informed the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that the Persian Financial Adviser had been consulted by the Persian Minister of Finance as to the possibility of raising money by cancelling the Muin's concession and selling it for a term of years, and he mentioned £200,000 as a suitable sum. The Financial Adviser, in consulting the Chargé d'Affaires as to our interests and the reply that he should give, added that he believed the suggestion emanated from the German Legation. Mr. Marling suggested that the Financial Adviser should reply that the transaction would be merely an advance in disguise, and that the Persian Government were debarred from obtaining advances, except on the condition stipulated in Sir C. Spring-Rice's note of the 31st August 1907, *viz.*, that the Persian Government would not contract

any new foreign loan without giving their creditors, England and Russia, the option of advancing money on the same conditions. It might be possible to obtain the concession for a British Company, but this would rouse the Muin's enmity, while the arbitrary cancellation of his concession might be questioned in the Medjliss later on, and we might also have the appearance of having exploited, for our benefit, the present political situation. The best solution, he considered, would be to urge the Muin to form the proposed Ellinger Company, as this would secure him against further blackmail and ensure his concession. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was of the same opinion.

In the latter view the Foreign Office concurred, and on the 27th August the Foreign Office addressed Messrs. Ellinger & Co. stating that they had received information from Tehran indicating the danger of the Persian Government attempting to raise money by the cancellation and sale of the Muin's oxide concession and recommended the firm to make a further serious effort to come to an agreement with Mr. Strick with a view to the formation of a company as soon as possible.

On the 29th August, the Secretary of State informed His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires that Messrs. Ellinger and Strick had broken off negotiations. Messrs. Ellinger and Company admitted that the terms offered to Messrs. Strick and Company were too severe, but said they were unable to offer better terms as the Muin did not now care to give a contract to all, preferring to sell direct. The Muin seemed to think that directly a company was formed he would no longer receive British protection and good offices, because, in the event of his being dispossessed by the Persian Government, the company would not be affected, but would continue under a new *cessionnaire*. Sir E. Grey requested the Chargé d'Affaires to assure the Muin on the point, if he considered this prudent, and to say that it was much hoped that he would consent to the formation of the company and would grant better terms to Messrs. Strick and Company so as to admit of their participation. The Chargé d'Affaires pointed out to the Muin how the formation of the Company would secure him in the possession of his concession, but the latter seemed clearly to be averse from the proposal. He said that he would shortly be going to Europe, and would discuss the matter there with Messrs. Ellinger and Company. The Muin mentioned that Messrs. Ellinger and Company had heard from Sir E. Grey that the Germans had offered £400,000 for the concession. He remarked that the figure was far in excess of the value of the concession, and that the Shah would not give it to the Germans, the Russian Legation having warned His Majesty's against doing so.

On the 5th September, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires informed Sir E. Grey that he had received information that the Germans had made an offer of an advance of £300,000, less interest at 4 per cent. for a grant of the concession for a period of 12 years. Mr. Marling accordingly informed the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs that he must protest against the pledging of the country's resources while the interest on the British loan remained unpaid. There was not definite reason for assuming that the Muin had been squared by the Germans and the Russian Legation who were acting in support of His Britannic Majesty's Minister had already moved in the matter.

Subsequently Mr. Ellinger informed the Board of Trade that the Muin would be willing to form a Company for the working of the oxide concession, provided that he received satisfactory assurance of protection by His Majesty's Government for himself and his sons in the event of such a Company being formed in England. The Muin was informed that, in the event of a company being formed, he could rely upon the absolute protection of his property and upon the benevolent protection of the British Government during the currency of a *bonâ fide* contract, provided that the contract had been concluded before the need for protection arose.

After further negotiation, Messrs. Strick and Company refused to enter into the company proposed by the Muin on the grounds that the terms were much too onerous. Nor would they take up a contract for the purchase of oxide in view of the uncertainty of finding a market for the commodity.

Mr. Ellinger subsequently announced the conclusion of a three years' contract between himself on behalf of his firm as agents for the Muin and Messrs. Andrew, Weir and Company for the sale of Ormuz oxide.

In April 1910, His Majesty's Government learnt that the Persian Government had declared that the concession held by the Muin for the working of the oxide mines at Ormuz had lapsed in 1905. It was also subsequently reported that the Persian Government had entered into a contract with Messrs. Strick and Company under which they were to sell to the latter 30,000 tons of oxide at 40s. per ton, free on board, 6,000 tons to be taken up each year for five years from date. They further bound themselves to sell exclusively to this firm during the term of the contract and to give them 1,000 tons of oxide free on board, in return for which Messrs. Strick and Company accepted full responsibility for any claim which Messrs. Weir might have against the Persian Government or the Muin on account of their contract with the latter. With a view to secure that Messrs. Weir should suffer no loss through the action of the Persian Government in entering into this new agreement supposing that the Muin was within his rights in making the contract with that firm, the Persian Government were warned of the responsibility which they would incur for any damage which British interest might sustain by illegal action on their part. The Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs in a note of the 1st June 1910, to Mr. Marling, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, stated that Messrs. Strick and Company had guaranteed that any claims against the Muin or the Persian Government on account of the above contract should be settled by them. The company would have no ground to claim any damages and he therefore considered the question closed. His Majesty's Government, however, held that the Persian Government's note was simply an assertion and that unless they produced satisfactory proof that the Muin's concession had expired before the signature of his contract with Messrs. Weir, they would be forced to hold the Persian Government responsible if British interests were in any way injured through their action in disregarding the contract. They instructed Mr. Marling, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, to inform the Persian Government accordingly.

On the 8th July, Mr. Marling reported that Mr. Brown, Strick's agent, had informed him that the formal contract had not yet been signed. The Persian Government, however, did not seem to have any wish to withdraw the contract. Mr. Marling hesitated to send a *caveat* as it might delay signature. It was also believed that Persian Government would shortly inform Mr. Marling officially that the Muin's concession had lapsed in 1905. His Majesty's Government accordingly agreed with him that it would be better to suspend action for the present.

The Secretary of State telegraphed on the 8th November 1905 that the (12) *Sponge Exploration Syndicate*. "Sponge Exploration Syndicate" (composed principally of persons of Greek extraction) had informed the Foreign Office of a concession which they had obtained of exclusive rights to fish for sponges on the Persian coast; and the Company was now anxious to secure a similar concession from the Sultan of Maskat and the other Chiefs on the Arabian Coast, and had sought British support.

The Secretary of State called for the views of the Government of India and for further information regarding the constitution of the Syndicate. Major Cox questioned the British character of the Syndicate, and expressed doubt whether there were any sponges in the Gulf worth fishing. He thought that Maskat was debarred, by article 4 of the Commercial Treaty, from granting a monopoly, and that the Arab Shaikhs also could be prevented from granting exclusive rights. He recommended that no encouragement should be given to the Syndicate, and that the Shaikhs should be put on their guard.

The Sultan of Maskat had in the meantime granted a written concession to fish for sponges for 15 years, but without monopoly. The concession amounted to little more than a license to gather sponges in Oman waters extending from Ras-ul-Had to Khasal along the shore and ten miles out to sea; but a subsidiary article exempted plant imported by the Concessionaire from the payment of customs duty.

Major Cox enquired whether he should advise the Sultan to cancel the concession which, in his opinion, formed a breach of the Anglo-Oman commercial treaty and whether he might warn the other Shaikhs against following a similar course. The Secretary of State agreed to the latter proposal and with his approval the Chief of Bahrain was warned, but the matter was only mentioned to the Shaikh of Kuwait, language which might be regarded as authoritative advice being avoided.

As regards the concession granted by the Sultan of Maskat, the Government of India concurred generally in the views of Major Cox and thought that the Sultan should be asked to cancel the concession as violating articles 4 and 6 of the treaty of 1891. The Secretary of State's view was that, as there did not appear to be any monopoly or exclusive privilege of trade granted by the concession, and as objection to exemption of machinery from customs duty could not lead to any practical result, he did not consider it expedient to demand cancellation of the concession. He observed, however, that the Sultan might be advised to insist on the strict observance of the condition which reserves to His Highness all produce other than sponges, so as to avoid injury to the fishing rights of tribes as far as possible.

The chief conditions of the separate concession granted by the Persian Government to the "Sponge Exploration Syndicate" were the following :—

- (1) The Syndicate to have the exclusive right of exploiting the sponge fisheries for a period of 50 years.
- (2) The concession to extend from Fao to Gwettar, including all the Islands belonging to Persia, on the clear understanding that it applies only to Persian waters.
- (3) The Syndicate to pay to the Persian Government £1,500 on the grant of the concession, and a royalty of 50 francs on every 200 pounds of sponges exported abroad or imported for sale into Persia; after expiry of 30 years from the date of the grant, the Syndicate to pay an additional fixed annual rent of £300.
- (4) Machinery, etc., required for the fishery operations to be passed free of customs duty.
- (5) No export duty to be charged on sponges, but Customs duty according to the tariff of the day to be paid on imports for sale in Persia.
- (6) Persian workmen to be employed as far as possible. Foreign employes must be Greeks and the number must be limited to the minimum necessary for the industry.

On the 25th June 1906 Major Cox represented to the Government of India that Mr. T. J. Malcolm, of the firm of Messrs. A. and T. J. Malcolm of Bushire, had informed him that the Sponge Syndicate expected to acquire pearl-fishing privileges as a sequel to their sponge concession and that he was anxious to enlist British support to obtain a pearl-fishing concession for himself. The Government of India pointed out to His Majesty's Government that the concession now granted to the Sponge Exploration Syndicate, though ostensibly limited to the exploitation of sponges, did not (like the Maskat concession) provide that an overseer should watch operations on behalf of the Persian Government, and that all produce, except sponges, should become the property of that Government. The absence of this safeguard together with the report that the Syndicate expected pearl-fishing privileges, warranted the belief that such privileges would shortly be either openly granted or tacitly connived at; and as the extent of the Persian banks and the rights therein of the Arab tribes under our protection were alike undefined, this might lead to grave complications. Another difficulty would be that the Persian Government did not possess the means either of keeping the concessionaires from transgressing the limits of their territorial waters, or of preventing conflicts with the local Chiefs, and that additional patrol duties would thus be entailed on His Majesty's ships stationed in the Gulf. The Government of India, therefore, suggested that His Majesty's Minister at Tehran should be instructed to warn the Persian Government of the probable application by the Sponge Syndicate or pearl-fishing privileges and to deprecate in anticipation any open or tacit amplification of the sponge concession.

In March 1908 the Sponge Exploration Syndicate intimated to the Bushire Consulate that they were about to bring out divers and apparatus from Europe, and that they would start operations in about two months' time at the islands; and in July it was reported that seven Greeks with machinery and diving apparatus had landed at Bandar Abbas.

This party started operations near Ormuz, Kishm, and Kharak, but subsequently abandoned them, having met with excessive heat, and very little success.

On the 20th October 1906, Sir C. Spring-Rice addressed a note to the Persian Government to the effect that, according to evidence which had reached the British Government, it seemed probable that the Sponge Syndicate would apply for,

or, in default of proper control, assume the right to fish for pearls in the Persian Gulf. He pointed out that the pearl banks on the Persian shore were visited by boats from the Arabian as well as the Persian shores, and drew the attention of the Persian Government to the warning conveyed by him in June 1900 that His Majesty's Government could not recognise any contract which would interfere with the established right of Chiefs under their protection. He remarked that any infraction of these would inevitably lead to grave complications which both Governments wished to avoid as well as to the increase of the patrol duties of the ships of the two Governments. He, therefore, warned the Persian Government in anticipation that His Majesty's Government would view with grave concern any open or tacit amplification of the sponge concession.

Sir C. Spring-Rice subsequently reported that he had not received a reply from the Persian Government to this communication, but that, in conversation, the Minister of Foreign Affairs had assured him that the Persian Government would not permit the Syndicate to extend its operations so as to include pearl-fishing.

His Majesty's Secretary of State for India telegraphed on the 9th May 1907 stating that the Sponge Exploration Syndicate were applying to the local market for assistance. He enquired whether the Government of India considered it advisable that British capital should be encouraged to finance the concessions in order to obviate the possibility of foreign control. Major Cox was asked for his views on the proposal, and also whether he had any information regarding the commercial possibilities of the sponge fisheries in the Gulf. He replied on the 17th May that he had no knowledge of the commercial prospects of the enterprise, but he considered that politically it would be wise to encourage British capital to finance the concessions, provided that His Majesty's Government stipulated, as a condition of their support, conformity by the Syndicate with the policy of non-interference with the rights of Arab tribes to the pearl-fisheries. The Government of India communicated these views to the Secretary of State on the 22nd May, and added that, if the Syndicate had proofs of the existence of profitable sponge beds, it would be desirable, in their opinion, that British capital should have as large a share in the venture as possible.

The concession granted by the Sultan of Maskat to the Sponge Exploration Syndicate contained a passage in which it was stated that the permission or right to fish for sponge was granted to the Syndicate to a distance of ten miles in breadth. As it seemed possible that the Syndicate might, under the terms of this clause, so extend their operations as to interfere with the tribal pearl fisheries, His Majesty's Government considered it desirable that an intimation should be conveyed to the Sultan of Maskat and the Sponge Exploration Syndicate, Limited, that His Majesty's Government were unable to recognise the right of the former to confer such a privilege outside his own territorial waters, and over the high seas situated between three and ten miles from the coast. The necessary action was taken in the matter.

In connection with the question of the right of the Sultan of Maskat to confer the privilege of fishing for sponges, His Highness enquired from the Political Agent whether he would be entitled to receive a share of such produce as might be extracted by the Syndicate outside his territorial waters. The Political Agent at Maskat was informed that the Government of India preferred to wait until a concrete case arose before offering an opinion on the subject.

(13) *Opening of a branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia at Mohammerah.* A branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia was opened at Mohammerah on the 1st January 1910.

As an outcome of the Commercial Mission which with the co operation of the various Chambers of Commerce, visited Kerman, in the winter of 1904, under the leadership of Mr. Newcomen, a sample-room was started at Kerman as a medium of communication between the Indian manufacturer and the Persian wholesale dealer, and as a means of introducing the products of India to the notice of the Persian merchants.

On the 4th September 1907, the Upper India Chamber of Commerce wrote expressing their opinion that an arrangement should be feasible by which the local



merchant in charge of the sample-room, who, it was understood, was a wholesale dealer himself, could act as agent for Indian manufacturers. In this event, the Chamber considered the merchant would be in a position to keep Indian manufacturers informed as to the state of the market, and also as to whether small trial consignments for wholesale disposal might be ventured. In any case, manufacturers in India would, no doubt, be glad to keep him supplied with samples and quotations.

After some correspondence the Government of India issued instructions to His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Kerman, to assist the merchant in charge of the sample-room in communicating direct with those firms in India, whose samples were in his charge on the subject of sales to be made by him on commission, and informed the Chamber of the action taken.

An account of the measures taken by Great Britain to consolidate British influence in the Gulf region may fitly conclude with a mention of some steps taken to procure the good-will of the Arab Chieftains in that region.

A proposal to increase the salutes accorded to the three important Shaikhs of Mohammerah, Kuwait and Bahrain was put forward by the Resident in the Gulf, and in March 1909 was recommended to the Secretary of State by the Government of India, who expressed the opinion that, in consideration of the enhanced importance and prestige which these three Chiefs, especially the Shaikhs of Mohammerah and Kuwait, enjoyed owing to recent political developments in the Persian Gulf, a salute of five guns was no longer adequate. They agreed with Major Cox that a salute of 12 guns might appropriately be accorded to the Shaikhs of Kuwait and Mohammerah and one of 11 guns to the Shaikh of Bahrain. If these proposals were accepted, they recommended, as suggested by Major Cox, that the eldest sons of the Shaikhs of Mohammerah and Kuwait should receive a salute of five guns, and the eldest son of the Shaikh of Bahrain one of three guns, on the occasion when they visit one of His Majesty's ships as their fathers' representatives. The Government of India were also of opinion that the increased salutes should, in each case, be personal to the present Chiefs, and that it should be explained to them that it was within the discretion of the Government of India to continue it, or not, to their successors.

His Majesty's Government sanctioned these proposals; but the Secretary of State considered it desirable that Major Cox should consult Sir G. Barclay, His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran, as to how far the proposal to increase the salute of the Shaikh of Mohammerah was affected by the Shaikh's position as a Persian subject. This reference was made; and the Minister at Tehran having no objection to urge, it was directed that the new scale of salutes should come into force from the 22nd September 1909.

The Government of India also decided to exempt from the levy of Customs duty the arms and ammunition imported into India by Arab Chiefs from the Persian Gulf while on visits to India. The exemption is, however, conditional on the production of a certificate signed by the Political Officer concerned, showing the status of the Chief or notable and stating the number and description of the weapons which he should be allowed to import into India free of duty.

The agency of communications as a means of furthering British influence in the Gulf was kept well in view by Lord Minto's Government during the period under review.

At the time Lord Minto assumed office, the insecure condition of the Bandar Abbas-Kerman trade route, and the lawless condition of the country bordering thereon which detrimentally affected British trade, was engaging the attention both of the Indian and Home Governments. Various schemes had been put forward to remedy this state of

(15) *Enhanced salutes to Arab Chiefs.*  
(16) *Exemption of Arab Chiefs and notables from the Persian Gulf, while visiting India, from the levy of customs duty on their arms and ammunition.*

Communications.

(1) *Protection of the Bandar Abbas-Kerman trade route.*

things ; and the views of the Government of India thereon had been asked for by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India. On the 15th March 1906, Lord Minto's Government addressed a despatch to the Secretary of State for India, stating that of the various proposals which had been made in connection with the question of improving the security of the Bandar Abbas-Kerman trade route, two appeared worthy of serious consideration :—

- (a) A projected increase in the number of Consular officers in the neighbourhood of the trade route.
- (b) The establishment of road guards, and the increase of the Kerman Consular guard from 6 to 24 sowars.

In connection with the first scheme the Government of India pointed out that His Majesty's Minister at Tehran considered that the Persian Government might agree to the appointment of Consular Agents at Sirjan and Rafsinjan ; and that he entertained no doubt that a Consular Agent would be recognised by the Persian Government at Bampur if the Government of India would withdraw their objection to the residence of a Persian Consular officer at Quetta. They considered that the appointment of Consular officers at these places would be beneficial to the interests of British trade, and would fully justify the comparatively small expenditure likely to be involved. They did not, however, think it advisable that the proposal to appoint a representative at Bampur should be pressed if the Persian Government should make its acceptance conditional on our acceptance of a Persian Consul at Quetta, as there were political objections to this latter arrangement. In case it should be finally decided that it was not advisable to press for as many as three fresh Consular appointments, the following was given as the relative scale of importance of the three posts :—

*Bampur.*—As being the centre of a district where at present there is no British Consular supervision at all, and as being nearest to the Indian frontier ;

*Rafsinjan.*—The centre of the most populous district in the province of Kerman, and point of junction where the Bandar Abbas post leaves the main Kerman-Yezd line ; and

*Sirjan.*—Which though said to be the key of the main caravan routes is at present unconnected by telegraph with the outer world.

They concurred in a proposal which had been made to open a telegraph office at Rafsinjan, and that Sirjan should be connected with that place by a branch telegraph line.

As regards the second proposal they agreed in the necessity for the establishment of efficient road guards to protect the trade route, but did not consider that a spontaneous offer should be made of a subsidy to assist the Shah in the performance of duties which are obviously incumbent upon the Persian Government to discharge. They stated that they were prepared to make a small temporary increase in the number of sowars employed in this part of Persia, in order that small detachments from the Kerman Consular escort should travel periodically between Bandar Abbas and Kerman, and that traders should thus be afforded the opportunity of despatching their caravans under the convoy thus afforded. It was pointed out that a mounted escort of 4 sowars had now been attached to the Bandar Abbas Consulate : and that this detachment might be utilized in co-operation with the Kerman escort and a part of the further increase which would be required might be attached to the recently appointed temporary Vice-Consul at Bam.

The Government of India stated that the total value of the trade of the port of Bandar Abbas for the last three years averaged nearly half a million sterling, of which a considerable proportion had been with the United Kingdom, and though it would be difficult to form a just estimate of the increase likely to result from the proposed measures, the Government of India were convinced that this trade could not expand to anything approaching its full possibilities until a reasonable amount of safety has been secured on the route.

Finally, the Government of India added that the adoption by His Majesty's Government of the present proposals would be all the more necessary, should they



eventually decide to proceed with the larger scheme of developing communication from the Coast to the Central Persian Plateau *via* Minab and Regan, which was strongly recommended by the recent Commercial Mission to Persia, and in regard to which Lord Curzon, when Viceroy of India, had addressed Mr. Brodrick in August 1905.

The necessity for providing measures for the protection of the Kerman-Bandar Abbas route was further emphasised in March 1906 by a daring robbery perpetrated on three Indian sowars while on their way from Bandar Abbas to relieve a portion of the Kerman Consular guard; and in December 1906 the Government of India addressed a despatch to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India in which they suggested that, as a complement to the proposal referred to above, it was desirable that 16 cavalry should be substituted for the 16 infantry already sanctioned as an escort for His Majesty's Consul at Bandar Abbas. These men would be employed partly on the regular duties of a Consular escort and guard, and partly as a means of protecting caravans on their way from Bandar Abbas to the interior from depredation such as the robbery referred to above. It was also pointed out that cavalry would be more suitable than infantry in the event of the Consul passing the summer in the hills behind Bandar Abbas when it would be necessary for him to keep up his communication with the port. The cost of the proposed substitution was estimated as an additional approximate outlay of Rs. 6,208 initial and Rs. 8,242 annual recurring expenditure. In May 1906, the India Office enquired whether the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would be prepared to approach the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury with a view to their accepting a moiety of the expense.

On 14th December 1909, the Government of India informed the Secretary of State that they considered the improvement of communication between Bandar Abbas and Kerman *via* Minab and Regan very desirable. A mere caravan road would not be profitable and caravans would not use it. The best arrangement would be a cart road on a railway alignment, so that it might, when required, be converted into a railway. A telegraph line should follow the road. The concession, if obtained, would presumably include the right to police the road in some form, the concessionaires being allowed either to raise a limited number of police themselves or to subsidise the local Khans. The Government also held, as on a similar occasion in 1904, that they could only contemplate the scheme, provided that His Majesty's Government were satisfied that it would not induce a corresponding movement towards Meshed by Russia. It would, they considered, be expedient to postpone the construction of the proposed road, if it was likely to precipitate the construction of the Askabad-Meshed line.

The scheme for the improvement of communications between Bandar Abbas and Kerman received the approval of Sir G. Barclay, who was, however, not very confident that the Medjliss would grant the concession, and pointed out moreover the dangers that would attend the survey of the country concerned just at present. His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg considered it unlikely that the Russian Government would object to the scheme, being more interested in the north and north-west of Persia and being convinced of our loyalty to the Convention.

His Majesty's Government decided that it would be better not to mention the matter to the Russian Government at this stage, and informed the promoters of the scheme that it was receiving careful consideration, but that the present moment was not favourable for the despatch of an engineer to make a survey of the country, owing to its very disturbed condition.

With reference to the telegram from the Government of India of the 14th December 1909, the Foreign Office proposed, in any further communication that His Majesty's Government may make to the Russian Government on the subject of railway construction in Persia, to repeat the request already made that the line from Askabad to Meshed may not be built. The Foreign Office are of opinion that in view of the financial considerations involved, there is little prospect of that work being carried out at present.

Sir A. Nicolson (9th January 1910) considered it doubtful whether the Russian Government would, for some time as yet, seriously consider the Askabad-Meshed

railway project, in view of more urgent requirements elsewhere and of financial difficulties. The Russian Government would undoubtedly undertake the construction of the line when necessity arose, and this they would be entitled to do under the terms of the Anglo-Russian Convention, and we should have no ground for objection. Sir A. Nicolson submitted that it would be imprudent to press the Russian Government to defer indefinitely the realization of its schemes within its own sphere, as it might induce a policy of retaliation in regard to our schemes in the British sphere.

The Government of India had for some time had under their consideration the best means of opening up the road through the Lur country, the concession for which is held by the Persian Transport Company, a British concern. But there had been no improvement in the situation in Luristan, and the Kialan route was therefore impossible. In the spring of 1906, Captain Lorimer reverted to the question, recommending on this occasion that a road should be opened between Dizful and Khorremabad through the instrumentality of the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh and Nazar Ali Khan, Fath-i-Sultan, through whose territory in the Semarra district he now proposed that the road northwards should pass, rather than by the Kialan road which passes through the tribe of the Direkwands. Captain Lorimer proposed to ensure the security of the route by the employment of 100 armed sowars to be raised locally, and to construct two small forts or serais. So far, however, the Vice-Consul had had no personal intercourse with the Wali on the subject, negotiations having been carried on with a special agent deputed by the Wali for the purpose. As it was not considered satisfactory that any arrangements should be made except in direct consultation with the Wali, Mr. Grant-Duff was informed that, although it was doubtful if the present time was very suitable for taking up the matter seriously, the Vice-Consul might, perhaps, be able to pay a visit to the Wali of Pusht-i-Kuh and find out something about the nature of the country and the attitude and position of the Wali. On this point Mr. Grant-Duff's opinion was invited; and he replied that any negotiations regarding the road would be directly between the Chiefs and His Majesty's Government. He stated that the Persian Government would not assist or, in case of outrage, grant redress, and that the matter seemed to resolve itself into a question as to whether or not His Majesty's Government were prepared to spend a sum of money experimentally with a view to increasing our political influence and trade. If so, Mr. Grant-Duff considered that the Vice-Consul might be instructed to enter into preliminary negotiations with the Wali. He added that the Central Government was so weak in Luristan that events at Tehran scarcely affected the question. His Majesty's Government, however, considered that it was not desirable at that time to move in the matter of opening up a trade route through Luristan.

In August 1904, a suggestion for extending the Bushire-Fao cable to Kuwait was put forward by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, but no action was taken by Lord Curzon's Government, as it appeared that the Turkish authorities would be inclined to regard any such proposal as an infringement of the *status quo*. Sir N. O'Connor considered it especially advisable at that time to avoid any appearance of such infringement while negotiations were in progress with the Turkish Government regarding the island of Bubiyan.

Major Cox, on the 3rd February 1907, again directed the attention of the Government of India to the project, and stated that in his opinion Shaikh Mubarak would readily assent to the project and co-operate in its execution.

As the protests which had, from time to time, been addressed to the Porte by His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador against the maintenance of a Turkish military position on the island of Bubiyan had apparently proved unsuccessful, the Government of India considered that there was no longer the same need as in 1904 to refrain from putting forward the proposal, and they accordingly, on the 11th July 1907, recommended it to the favourable consideration of the Secretary of State. They observed that from a political point of view the arrangement seemed very desirable as it would both strengthen their position in Kuwait, and would convince the Shaikh of their intention to afford him the support and protection due to

him under the Agreement of 1889. Sir N. O'Connor had also drawn particular attention to the importance of this agreement as affecting future negotiations regarding the *debouche* of the Baghdad Railway.

Another strong argument in favour of the proposal was that, owing to the outbreak of plague at Bahrain it had become necessary to adopt quarantine measures at Kuwait. These had been placed under the supervision of the British Assistant Surgeon with the concurrence of the Shaikh. In view of Dr. Thomson's report it appeared probable that it would be necessary in the near future to establish a regular quarantine station there, in which case telegraphic communications would be essential.

The initial cost of the line was estimated at Rs. 1,84,800, with recurring annual charges of Rs. 7,120 *plus* some charges for the erection of residences and office; and the Government of India asked in the event of the proposal meeting with approval that a moiety of the expenditure involved might be defrayed by His Majesty's Government.

In May 1905, an agreement was concluded with the Persian Government for the construction of a line of telegraph

(4) *Henjam-Bandar Abbas telegraph extension.* to connect the Indo-European telegraph station at Henjam with Bandar Abbas across Kishm Island. The line was to be built by the Indo-European Telegraph Department; and to be handed over to the Persian control when the cost of construction had been paid by Persia. By the agreement we secured the right of a British signaller being located in the Bandar Abbas town office for the transmission of messages for abroad. In October 1905, the shore end of the cable was landed at a spot east of the town and directly in front of the site of the proposed new British Consulate at Bandar Abbas.

But difficulties at once arose regarding the location of the telegraph office, and cable house; the Persian authorities insisting upon a site which the Indo-European Telegraph authorities objected to as opposed to all technical requirements; and no arrangement was come to in the matter for some three years or so.

In March 1909, His Majesty's Minister at Tehran reported the conclusion of an agreement between the Persian Minister of Telegraphs and the Indo-European Telegraph Department, whereby a line was carried from the cable house, where the cable lands, to the telegraph office at the British Consulate and thence to the Persian Office in the town.

In the end of August 1909 the line was thrown open to international traffic under the management of the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

In 1905 it had been decided that an additional route between Persia and

(5) *Karachi-Panjgur and Central Persia India was imperative for the efficient transmission of the increasing traffic with Europe; and the proposal was to connect*  
*telegraph extension.* Karachi, *viâ* Las Bela, with Panjgur, leaving for future settlement the question of the route to be followed from the last-named place. Subsequently the Secretary of State decided, after ascertaining that the Government of India agreed, that the Karachi-Panjgur section should follow the route *viâ* Pirandur and Wahli Aiu Dap, and not that from Las Bela to Panjgur *viâ* the Kej valley; and orders were issued for the construction of the line accordingly.

On the 9th February 1906, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India requested the views of His Excellency the Viceroy on a proposal made by the Director-in-Chief of the Indo-European Telegraph Department to connect the Central Persian Telegraph line *viâ* Robat and Merui with the telegraph extension from Karachi to Panjgur. After consulting the Hon'ble the Agent to the Governor-General, Baluchistan, His Excellency the Viceroy informed the Secretary of State (May 8) that the Government of India were prepared to agree to the proposal, but as at present advised they did not consider Merui a suitable place, and would prefer further examination of all possible routes from Panjgur by the local staff of the Indo-European Telegraph Department. Mr. Morley replied that the necessary instructions had been given for the examination by the local staff of the Indo-European Telegraph Department of all possible routes from Panjgur.

It is time now to notice a means of communication, which apart from its political and commercial uses, was likely to be of immense value in the Persian Gulf region in the suppression of the arms traffic, and the general police measures of the British Government.

In August 1908, the Secretary of State for India called for the views of the Government of India as to the desirability of fitting the three subsidised vessels employed in the Persian Gulf with apparatus for wireless telegraphy.

(6) *Installation of wireless telegraphy on vessels employed in the Persian Gulf.*

The Government of India replied that the installation on the three subsidised vessels would be of great advantage not only for the suppression of the arms traffic, but also for general police work in the Gulf. It would be necessary, for the former purpose, to establish a shore station at some convenient point, probably Henjam, and for general purposes it would be desirable to have stations at Bahrain and Kuwait also. The proposal was strongly advocated by Major Cox.

The cost for installations on the three ships was estimated at about Rs. 22,900 initial, and Rs. 245 monthly recurring. The cost of a land station with four masts at Jask or Henjam, where there were telegraph stations, was estimated at about Rs. 35,000 initial and Rs. 365 monthly recurring, and at Bahrain or Kuwait Rs. 22,000 initial, exclusive of buildings, and Rs. 947 monthly recurring.

The cost of the installation on the vessels might, it was suggested, be met by the Admiralty, the Home and Indian Exchequers equally dividing the charges for the shore station.

In a letter to the Admiralty, dated the 28th October 1908, the Secretary of State for India stated that he would prefer that the proposal for the installation of wireless telegraphy on the subsidised vessels should be considered separately without reference to the further question raised by the Government of India of the establishment of land stations for wireless telegraphy on the Persian Gulf littoral, as to which he proposed to take no action for the present. He preferred to await the Government of India's reply regarding a scheme which was now under their consideration, for the erection of wireless stations throughout the Indian region generally for strategic purposes.

In December 1908, the Resident in the Gulf submitted proposals for the installation of wireless telegraphy at Kuwait, Bushire, Bahrain, Lingah, Debai, and Bandar Abbas, which he represented was extremely desirable alike from the commercial, political, naval and quarantine points of view, and in connection with the suppression of the arms traffic. A further incentive to the consideration of the question was supplied by the report in August 1909 that Messrs. Wonckbaas and Company were anxious to establish, on their own account, wireless communication between Bahrain and Bushire. The Secretary of State intimated on 12th September 1909 that any Persian Gulf scheme would depend on the consent of the Treasury to bear a moiety of the cost. The Government of India telegraphed to the Secretary of State on the 6th December that they proposed the eventual establishment of wireless installations at Bushire, Bandar Abbas, Lingah, Kuwait, Bahrain and Debai, which should be able to communicate with each other. Assuming the establishment of the 600 miles wireless station at Jask, which was recommended as a part of the general scheme for India, the Government of India thought that a range of 200 miles would ordinarily suffice at the six stations mentioned above, but that owing to the greater distance between Bushire and Lingah a 300-mile range appeared to be desirable at those places. These stations would be fitted for normal working wave length of 600 metres, but could receive any wave length of 600 metres and over, and would be capable of transmitting wave length up to 800 metres. His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indies Squadron, considered that these wave lengths would suit naval work excellently. The cost of buildings at each station was estimated at between Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000 and furniture at Rs. 1,000. Exclusive of these the estimated cost of plant and material, etc., for the six stations was given as Rs. 95,500 and annual recurring charges at Rs. 68,400. The Government of India explained that they did not propose to introduce the Gulf scheme until there was considerable improvement in the present state of Indian finances, and, in any case, when the funds became

available they proposed to give precedence to the case of Jask where a temporary installation had now been put up.

His Majesty's Government in reply directed (January 7, 1910) that there should be no question of introducing wireless telegraphy in the Persian Gulf, whatever be the condition of Indian finances, until a complete estimate of cost had been submitted and the scheme had received the sanction of His Majesty's Government.

The foregoing account does not exhaust the measures taken during the period under review to extend British-controlled communications connected with the Gulf region. In 1909 (*vide* Chapter I) Great Britain obtained under the Arabistan Convention the control of the Arabistan telegraph lines which traverse tracts of much importance to Indian interests; and the extension for twenty years, on their expiry in 1925, of the concessions of the telegraph lines from Tehran to Bushire and Jask to Gwadur.

It will be appropriate to notice first two cases of piracy, which very aptly illustrate the policy of Great Britain in regard to the preservation of her maritime supremacy, and the suppression of piracy in the Gulf. Other cases in which Great Britain interfered in pursuance of her policy of policing the Gulf will be found in the account of the several localities where they occurred, *e. g.*, Bahrain, Katr, etc.

In January 1906 the crew of a Persian dhow bound for Bahrain complained to Captain Prideaux that their boat having been driven by stress of weather into the anchorage of Abu Dhaluf on the north-western extremity of the Katr peninsula, they were ill-used by the Shaikh and people of the place and the cargo of the boat was forcibly removed and appropriated by the villagers. Captain Prideaux proceeded to Abu Dhaluf on board the H. M. S. *Sphinx* and summoned the Shaikh to reply to the accusation made against him. The Shaikh at first refused to comply, but on being threatened with punishment, he eventually appeared at Bahrain. He made a statement before Captain Prideaux to the effect that a quarter of the cargo of the boat in question had been given to some of his subjects by the boatmen in return for assistance rendered, and that the rest of it had been purchased from the Persians by the people of Katr. As no British or Bahrain interests appeared to have been involved in the case, the Government of India intimated to the Political Resident that Captain Prideaux would have been better advised had he refrained from action until he had obtained the orders of the Government of India.

Shortly afterwards the Turkish Ambassador in London informed His Majesty's Government that the Military Commandant at Medjid had reported to the Turkish Government on the proceedings of the Political Agent relative to the alleged piracy at Abu Dhaluf. The report was to the effect that, though there was nothing irregular in the conduct of the natives of Bandar Bain, where the boat stranded the Political Agent had forcibly taken away the Shaikh of the village; and that the frequent visits of the Political Agent to the villages on the coast of Katr had disquieted the natives. The India Office invited the attention of Sir Edward Grey to the reports furnished by the Government of India in the matter, and to the opinion of the latter that the Political Agent's action was not altogether well advised, but pointed out that His Majesty's Government had never recognised Turkish sovereignty on the Arabian coast below Ojair.

With reference to the observation made by the Government of India regarding Captain Prideaux's action, Major Cox pointed out that the orders were liable to be interpreted as implying that active interference by British officers was uncalled for in such cases of piracy unless British or British-protected interests were involved, and he requested that the position might be reconsidered before this interpretation of the orders crystallised into a principle of policy to be followed in the Persian Gulf.

With the approval of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the Government of India sent a reply to Major Cox containing the following explanation of

their policy in regard to the suppression of piracy in the Gulf. Many of the Chiefs on the coast were, either by treaty or usage, bound to abstain from maritime war, and it was both the right and the duty of the Government of India to demand redress from these Chiefs in the event of acts of piracy being committed by any of their subjects. It was further their duty to obtain redress for the subjects of these Chiefs when they suffered injuries by sea at the hands of other Arab tribes unconnected with the British Government by treaty or usage, as such Chiefs were not in a position to obtain satisfaction on their own account. Further, in order to free the sea from pirates and so to fulfil their obligations, the British Government might find it necessary to take action against such other tribes not only in cases in which British interests, or the interests of subjects of Chiefs connected with the British Government, were concerned, but also in cases in which the sufferers were subjects of foreign Powers, inasmuch as the British Government had been led to acknowledge a general obligation for the preservation of the maritime peace of the Gulf, an honourable duty which they had no desire to disclaim.

It was consistent with the policy and in consonance with the obligations of the Government of India that action should be taken to secure redress in such cases of piracy as the one under discussion, even though British interests were not affected; but, on the other hand, the nature of the action to be taken required careful consideration with reference to other interests involved. The British Government, no doubt, had a right to take action by sea in all cases for the suppression of piracy in territorial waters off the Katr coast, as they had claimed the right to take such measures as British naval commanders might think fit for the protection of British commerce and shipping, even in Turkish territorial waters. The question of action by land was, however, on a somewhat different footing. The Turkish Government had claimed supremacy over the Katr peninsula, and resented any action by British officers which might appear to disregard this claim. Although the British Government did not recognise Turkish sovereignty on the Arabian coast below Ojair, yet, at the same time, occasions frequently occurred when it was desirable to avoid offending Turkish susceptibilities if British interests could be adequately defended without doing so: and it was desirable, therefore, that when action was taken against tribes on the Katr peninsula, the British Government should be in a position, if necessary, to support it on the ground that British interests were involved. Further, it was advisable that the Government of India should not, without due deliberation, be involved in hostilities against any of the Katr tribes as unexpected complications might result. It had also to be remembered with reference to the question of reprisals on land, that apart from cases when a man-of-war might be in a position to capture a pirate boat red handed, instances in which immediate action would be required were likely to be rare. As the people of Katr could not permanently abandon their coast villages, nor part with the pearl boats on which their livelihood depended, nor cut themselves off from their commercial communication with Bahrain, the means of bringing pressure to bear upon them were always ready to hand, and the necessary pressure could be applied with the same effect after the lapse of some time, as immediately on the commission of a piracy.

Having regard to these considerations, the Government of India were averse to granting general discretion to local officers with regard to the action to be taken on land on the Katr coast for the prevention of punishment of disturbances of the maritime peace, nor were they prepared to lay down any general rule as to the cases in which redress might or might not be exacted. They would prefer that each case should be reported as it occurred, and they did not consider that the occurrence of a slight delay in disposing of the matter would involve any disadvantageous consequences as regards the ultimate settlement of such cases. Probably as a rule, before practical action was resorted to, it would be well to try the expedient of endeavouring to obtain redress by communicating with the leading Shaikh of Katr.

As regards the final disposal of the Abu Dhaluf case, Captain Prideaux had reported that the guilt of the villagers could not be regarded as proved, and he therefore recommended that the question of making the villagers restore the value of the wheat which they had removed from the Persian dhow might be dropped. The Government of India approved this proposal, and instructed Captain Prideaux to communicate the decision to the Shaikh of Abu Dhaluf in writing.



On 12th September 1907, the Government of India addressed a despatch to the Secretary of State on the subject of two acts of piracy committed by Arabs residing at Dayir—a place on the coast of Persia, about 100 miles south of Bushire.

(2) *Piracy committed on a Kuwait dhow.*

In November 1906, the pirates attacked a native boat belonging to the Persian port of Shiroh between Keis Island and Taona. They killed all the crew, except one boy who escaped after being left for dead, and seized the cargo which was valued at Rs. 6,000. In January 1907, the same pirates captured a Kuwait boom which was subsequently found stranded on the island of Amair. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf made representations on the subject of the first piracy to the Darya Begi, but as they produced no result he telegraphed to the Minister at Tehran and informed him of what had happened. At the same time, he requested the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf to proceed to Dayir, and make enquiries. The local authorities at Dayir, when questioned by Captain Bowman, denied all knowledge of the piracy, but from information subsequently received, it appeared that on the very day when H. M. S. *Sphinx* called at Dayir, the chief of the pirates was in Dayir and was staying with the Khan of that place. On the 16th of June 1907, His Britannic Majesty's Minister informed the Resident that they could hold out no hopes that useful action would be taken by the Persian Government in the matter at that juncture. It was true that in the first case the victims were Persian subjects and that it might be supposed that the Persian Government would themselves take steps to secure redress for their own subjects from the pirates residing within their jurisdiction. The British Government had, however, acknowledged a general obligation for the preservation of the maritime peace of the Gulf and it was their object to secure the suppression of piracy in Gulf waters. It would, therefore, in the opinion of the Government of India, be their duty, even if British interests or the interests of British protected persons were not primarily concerned, to take all possible action with a view to scattering the Dayir gang.

In the case of the second offence, the Government of India considered that they were under a special obligation in this instance, because some subjects of the Shaikh of Kuwait, to whom they were bound under the agreement of 23rd January 1899, to extend their good offices, had been robbed and murdered by the pirates. They accordingly recommended that a strong representation should be made to the Persian Government with a view to securing the capture and punishment of the offenders and full pecuniary reparation for the sufferers in the Kuwait case. In view of the offence committed against their own subjects, they remarked that the Persian Government would, presumably, be only too ready to co-operate with the British Government against the offenders. But as it appeared certain that no representations to the Persian authorities, whether made locally or at Tehran, were likely either to secure satisfaction for the offences which had been committed or to prevent a recurrence of such crimes in the future, the Government of India suggested that the Persian Government should be informed that, failing compliance with the demands of His Majesty's Government within a stated time, suitable naval action would be taken at Dayir.

They observed that, if the proposal was approved, it was quite possible that, in order to clear out the pirates, it might be necessary for the naval authorities not only to enter Persian territorial waters, but also to land men on the Persian coast. The Government of India quoted precedents showing that the British Government had, on previous occasions, enforced their claim to take measures even on Persian territory for the suppression of piracy, and in conclusion they pointed out that the most cogent reason in favour of immediate action in the present case was to be found in the fact that the Shaikh of Kuwait had asked, with reference to the piracy committed on his subjects, that the Government of India would concur in his employing a heavily-armed dhow to protect his vessels plying between Kuwait or Basrah and Persian ports. This proposal they considered should be negatived, since if the Shaikh, with the consent and assistance of the British Government, despatched an armed dhow to parade the Gulf, the Turks might regard it as a symptom of his growing independence, and they might complain of a disturbance of the *status quo*. Again, the Persian Government



might consider the move to be a sinister one, specially having regard to the fact that Shaikh Mubarak had recently rendered armed assistance to the Shaikh of Mohammerah. Finally, the policing of the Persian Gulf by Shaikh Mubarak would amount to an infringement of the British prerogative, and therefore, in accordance with established policy, could not be allowed. But it was evident that, if the British Government were to forbid the Shaikh to take steps for the protection of his subjects, and were at the same time to take no effective steps themselves, they would inevitably arouse his resentment. On the other hand, if they succeeded in securing reparation for the attack on Mubarak's subjects, this fact would afford an important demonstration of their will and power to protect his interests. They would thus, while confirming the Shaikh's allegiance to them, conclusively establish their claim to protect his subjects whether in Persia or elsewhere.

On receipt of this despatch His Majesty's Government informed the Minister at Tehran that although the sufferers in the Dayir piracy case were Persian subjects, yet the British Government had vital interests in the suppression of piracy in the Gulf waters and that as regards the Kuwait piracy case the British Government were bound to extend their good offices to Kuwait. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires was therefore instructed again to make strong representations to the Persian Government with a view to the capture and punishment of the pirates and the securing of pecuniary reparation for the Kuwait sufferers. He was further instructed to add that, failing compliance, suitable naval action would be taken for the capture and delivery of the offenders to the Persian authorities.

At the request of the Foreign Office the Admiralty instructed H. M. S. *Highflyer* to proceed at once to Dayir with a view to the capture of the pirates at sea, but with authority to land a force at Dayir, or elsewhere in the Persian Gulf if necessary; and on the 10th December, it was reported that the *Highflyer* had captured the pirate dhows and also two of the three pirate brothers, the third brother having escaped inland.

As it was discovered that the prisoners were Arab subjects of the Shaikh of Mohammerah, Major Cox suggested that they should be handed over to him for disposal instead of to the Persian authorities at Bushire. His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran ascertained that the Persian Government would raise no objection and accordingly authorised the adoption of this course. The men were handed over at Mohammerah and the Shaikh on receiving them stated that he was familiar with their antecedents and guilt and that he intended to imprison them for life.

The Resident at Bushire stated that it was clearly demonstrated by previous records and subsequent enquiries that, since their expulsion from Mohammerah territory and subsequently from Kuwait, the pirates had been enabled to live in security and carry on their profession with impunity by reason of the countenance and shelter accorded to them by Jamal Khan, the Chief of Dashti, and his lieutenant and relatives at the post of Dayir and Kangoon. Major Cox considered that, unless punishment was accorded to this family, the proceedings would not be complete. Captain Hickley, R.N., considered that certainly at Dayir, and in all probability at Kangoon, the mud castle of the Khan could be demolished at sufficiently close range by one of His Majesty's ships to avoid risk of damaging unoffending villagers who would be given adequate notice. The Resident suggested for consideration that, if possible, with the concurrence of the Persian Government, and, if necessary, without it, an ultimatum should be presented to Jamal Khan, who was then at one of his coast ports, calling upon him to pay a fine of Rs. 15,000 through the British Residency, for distribution among the families known to have lost relatives or merchandise in piracies, and informing him that, failing compliance, ships would forthwith take action as suggested above. Major Cox further considered that, if the British ships were accompanied for the sake of appearance by the Persian warship *Persepolis* so much the better, but it was feared that she was in such a condition that she could not be used.

His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires was authorised by His Majesty's Government to approach the Persian Government in this sense and to suggest the presence of a Persian official on board His Majesty's ship.

The Persian Government, however, declined assistance in the matter, asserting their willingness to undertake the destruction of the strongholds themselves.

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs held that, in view of the existing political conditions in Persia and of the success of the measures taken to secure the surrender of the pirates, it would be impolitic to pursue the matter further by threatening to destroy the strongholds or demanding the payment of a fine, and every endeavour was to be made to persuade the Persian Government to take this action.

On the 19th February 1908 a telegram was received from the Secretary of State enquiring whether the Government of India agreed to a proposal by the Foreign Office that an expression of appreciation should be conveyed to the Persian Government in regard to the services of the Khan of Bandar Rig, who had greatly assisted in the capture of the Dayir pirates. It was also suggested that the Government of India should make the Khan a small present. The Political Resident at Bushire reported that he had already given the Khan a handsome gold watch; but he considered that an expression of appreciation from His Majesty's Government to the Persian Government would benefit the Khan, specially if the fact of its having been conveyed might be intimated to him by the Resident. The Secretary of State telegraphed later that appreciation of the Khan's services would be conveyed to the Persian Government by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, who would inform Major Cox when this had been done, in order that the Khan might be informed by that officer.

In September 1905 it was suggested that the survey of the approaches

(3) *Survey of Ojair.*

to Ojair on the Hassa coast of Arabia opposite Bahrain might be included in the programme of survey operations which was then under contemplation for the waters round Kuwait. The work would probably be ultimately of political and strategical use. But His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople thought some form of protest from the Porte would follow on the suspicions which the projected maritime survey round Kuwait was sure to arouse in Turkish official circles, and he therefore considered the time unpropitious for the proposed undertaking. His Majesty's Government accordingly decided in December 1905 that the survey of the port should be deferred.

On the 11th May 1906, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India asked

(4) *Establishment of Tide-gauges at Kuwait and Bahrain.*

for the views of the Government of India on a proposal to establish two additional tide-gauges in the Persian Gulf, at Kuwait and Bahrain. In reply he was informed that the establishment of the tide-gauges was calculated to promote the commercial interest of India in the Persian Gulf, and that the Government of India did not anticipate that any objections would be raised by the Shaikhs of Kuwait and Bahrain to their erection.

But the proposal having been laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, Their Lordships observed that, though it was important that a fuller knowledge of the tides in the Persian Gulf should be obtained, they regretted they were unable to contribute towards the cost of obtaining such information, so large a sum as was involved in the scheme, viz., £1,059. A new automatic tide-gauge had recently been designed for the Admiralty, which, it was hoped, would prove far less costly both as regards installation and maintenance than the scheme submitted, and it was decided that the question should, therefore, be deferred pending the completion of the trials of this apparatus, which were to take place shortly.

In reply to an enquiry as to the possibility of improving the port of Bandar

(5) *Proposed improvement of the port of Bandar Abbas.*

Abbas with a view to the development of Indian trade with Persia, Mr. Grant-Duff reported, on the 16th August 1906, that there was not the slightest hope of the Persian Government being in a position to construct a harbour at Bandar Abbas, and he enquired whether the Government of India would undertake harbour works at that port similar to those under construction by the Russians at Enzeli. On the 2nd February 1907, Sir C. Spring-Rice was informed that the Government of India were not pre-

pared, on their present information, and in view of the defective character of existing communications between Bandar Abbas and the interior, to undertake the proposed improvements to the harbour, which could only be carried out at great cost, and moreover it was understood that His Majesty's Government were not at the present time in favour of embarking on any new enterprise in Persia.

On the 22nd of February 1907, His Majesty's Government asked for the

(6) *Navigation buoys.* views of the Government of India, as to the advisability of taking over for a nominal consideration the navigation buoys maintained in the Persian Gulf by the British India Steam Navigation Company, the Company continuing to maintain them in return for their use. The suggestion was made with reference to the fact that the Hamburg-American Company had offered to assist the British India Company in the maintenance of the buoys, and it seemed desirable to prevent the Germans from acquiring a vested interest in the matter. Replying to the Secretary of State on the 4th March, the Government of India stated that a proposal had been made by the British India Company in 1905 to the effect that the Government of India should take over their buoys free of charge, but that the Government of India were unable then of their own motion to accept it, as to do so might have resulted in international difficulties. As, however, the situation had since changed, the Government of India agreed that it was desirable to take over the buoys in the manner suggested, provided that the ordinary maintenance of the buoys would remain with the Company subject to such assistance as Government could appropriately render.

In September 1907 the Government of India addressed the Home Gov-

(7) *Flagstaff on Telegraph Islands, Musandim Promontory.* ernment on the subject of an existing British flagstaff on Telegraph Island, adjoining Musandim Promontory in the Straits of Ormuz at the outlet of the Persian Gulf. They intimated that the flagstaff in question might conceivably be useful in certain circumstances having regard to the German desire for an increase of influence in the Gulf and for a telegraph line to the east; and as neither the Sultan of Maskat nor any foreign Power had ever taken exception to its existence, it seemed very improbable that any international complications would arise from its maintenance in the future. The erection of the flagstaff could not be regarded as contravening, in any way, the provisions of the Treaty of 1862, which bound both France and England not to trench upon the independence of the Sultan of Maskat. In these circumstances, they proposed, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, to leave the flagstaff standing. His Majesty's Government decided later that the flagstaff should not be maintained, but that it need not be removed, as to do this might attract undesirable attention.

As it was considered advisable that the meteorological stations in the

(8) *Inspection of the meteorological stations in the Persian Gulf.* Persian Gulf should be inspected for the comparison of instruments and instruction of the observers, Lala Hem Raj, the second Assistant to the Meteorological Office, with the consent of the Government of India, was deputed by the Director-General of Observatories to inspect the stations of the Gulf. His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran and the Political Residents at Bushire and Baghdad were apprised of the intention, and were requested to make the necessary arrangements on account of the visit. His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, accordingly instructed the Persian Government, who telegraphed to the competent authorities to give the inspecting officer every facility. Lala Hem Raj sailed from Karachi for the Gulf on the 14th December 1907, and after having completed his tour without difficulty returned to India on the 4th January 1908.

In April and May 1908, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf report-

(9) *Irregular use of Persian Gulf Customs launches.* ed several instances of irregular action on the part of the Persian Customs authorities. Firstly, the R. I. M. S. *Lawrence* sighted the Bandar Abbas Customs launch emerging from an inlet on the

Maskat coast near Ras Musandim, 60 miles from Bandar Abbas, whither, according to the Captain's explanation, he had pursued a dhow which had left Bandar Abbas without a clearance.

Secondly, the Lingah Customs launch proceeded one day to the Persian portion of Bassidu, and after nightfall the Persian Customs Mudir and Nakhoda landed with their followers at the British station in spite of the protests of the British coal agent against their landing at night.

Thirdly, about the 3rd May the launch from Charbar sailed, without the slightest excuse, across to the Maskat coast, and seized and towed a hostile dhow to Bandar Abbas.

These incidents were reported to His Majesty's Government, who instructed the British Minister at Tehran to inform the Persian Government in writing that Persian Customs vessels had no right to act in the territorial waters of any Foreign State unless expressly authorised to do so by Convention with such State, and that they could not interfere with any vessels on the high seas except those flying the Persian flag; that they must strictly adhere to these principles of international law, and that, if similar incidents to those reported occurred, measures would be taken by His Majesty's Government to put a stop to them in order to avoid the danger of retaliatory measures on the part of the Arab Chiefs and to preserve the maritime peace of the Gulf.

On 15th January 1908 the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf addressed the Chargé d'Affaires by telegraph on the subject of the situation in the Mekran ports, at some of which the Baluch Mirs had forcibly suspended the operations of the Customs Department, and were levying duties themselves.

A few days later a similar occurrence was reported from Charbar, which port had been occupied on behalf of Saiyid Khan of Geh, who claimed to have authority from the Persian Government. The Customs Director had protested against the payment of duty to Saiyid Khan by British subjects, but both he and the Governor were helpless. Major Cox had requested Saiyid Khan to delay further action in any case for 48 hours, and warned him that, if this request was ignored and force applied to British subjects, he would run the risk of reckoning with the British Government as well as his own. *H. M. S. Perseus* was requested meanwhile to proceed to Charbar to protect British subjects.

Saiyid Khan's reply was to the effect that his authority had been given by the Governor-General of Kerman, and that he could wait no longer. He then forcibly levied Customs duties up to date and decamped at midnight with his followers leaving the Customs to look after themselves.

*H. M. S. Perseus* only arrived at Charbar after the Baluchis had decamped.

On the 13th August 1908 the Government of India addressed the Secretary of State on the subject of the better lighting of the Persian Gulf. In 1904 attention had been called by the administration of Lord Curzon to the desirability of placing a lighthouse on some suitable site at the extremity of the Musandim Promontory, and, in September of the same year, a request was made for the services of an expert, to be engaged through the Trinity House, to examine and report on the proposal as well as on the general question of lighting the Gulf. Subsequently the matter was brought prominently to notice when, in connection with a proposed revision of the subsidy to be paid to the British India Steam Navigation Company for the fast weekly mail service to the Persian Gulf, Messrs. Mackinnon, Mackenzie, the Managing Agents of the Company, pointed out that one of the most serious difficulties in the way of accelerating and improving the mail service was the absence of lights which rendered navigation dangerous except by daylight.

The Government of India commented on the strategical and political importance of the matter and proposed that the general question of the better lighting of the Gulf should be examined locally by a Commission of Enquiry composed of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, the Senior Naval Officer, and the

Officer in charge of the Marine Survey of India with the assistance of an expert whose services should be obtained through the Trinity House.

The Secretary of State intimated his approval of the proposal and arrangements were accordingly made to commence proceedings at Maskat at the end of March 1909.

The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf raised the question as to what intimation should be made to the local authorities in connection with the proceedings of the Committee of Enquiry. His Majesty's Government approved his suggestion that (1) as regards Maskat, the Sultan should be informed verbally that we were examining the question of improving the aids to navigation in the Persian Gulf and would rely upon his co-operation in the matter of the provision of sites, but added that nothing should be said to the Sultan of Maskat to lead him to believe that immediate action, except, perhaps, as regards Maskat itself, was contemplated; and that (2) as regards Persian territory, no communication need be made to the Persian Government, but that it should be left to the Resident, when occasion arose, to satisfy the enquiries of the local authorities.

The Government of India issued instructions to the Director of the Royal Indian Marine to construct, for the use of the Political Agent at Bahrain, a steam-launch similar to those built for the Persian Government, and a motor-boat for use in shallower waters. These vessels were intended for the policing of the pearl banks and the suppression of piracy in the vicinity of Bahrain.

The foregoing summary of the maritime and police supervision of the Gulf region during the period 1905-10 may be appropriately followed by an account of the arms traffic in the Persian Gulf, and the measures taken by Great Britain in regard thereto.

The traffic in arms and ammunition in the Persian Gulf had always attracted the attention of the Indian Government as a constant menace to the peace of the Gulf and the Indian frontier. From time to time the arms trade at various places (Kuwait, Bahrain and the Trucial coast ports) on the Arabian shore of the Gulf, and throughout the Persian coast generally, had been prohibited without any lasting results. Owing, however, to treaty engagements with other powers, the Sultan of Maskat had been unable to prohibit the importation into Maskat of the merchandize of the nations concerned. In these circumstances Maskat had become a centre of the trade, and the point of distribution of arms to other ports that permit of a ready diffusion into the interior. In view of the spread of the evil, the Government of India addressed His Majesty's Government on several occasions as to the advisability of obtaining the co-operation of other powers in suppressing the arms trade. France, both in virtue of her treaty rights and the extent of her dealings in this branch of trade at Maskat and Jibuti is the chief power whose assistance was required. His Majesty's Government had, however, been unable to secure this and the political situation in consequence of the decision of the Hague Tribunal (see French Hague case) precluded any idea of approaching the French Government.

During November 1905, an attempt was made by M. Goguyer of Maskat to open a traffic in arms at Kuwait under an alleged permit from Shaikh Mubarak. His design was frustrated by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and M. Goguyer lodged a protest with the French Government against this action on the part of Major Cox. M. Laronce, the French Vice-Consul at Maskat, declared that the French Government were not aware of the prohibition against the arms trade at Kuwait, but would consider favourably any proposals by His Majesty's Government for the stoppage of the traffic at Maskat. In connection with the Kuwait prohibition, Major Cox stated (31st December 1905) that Shaikh Mubarak had not enforced its provisions, and suggested a remonstrance. In consequence however of information received during March 1906 from the Secretary of State regarding Turkish complaints as to the landing of arms at Kuwait, Major Cox was directed to remind Shaikh Mubarak of his agreement of 1900, and to request compliance with its terms.

A report was received in December 1905, that a considerable consignment of arms had been landed on the Perso-Baluch coast from Maskat. It was then proposed that the Political Officer in Mekran should be allowed to cross the frontier with an adequate force to stop caravans. To this, however, the Persian Government would not agree, stating that a special officer would be sent to deal with the matter, and requesting that he might be assisted by British officers. Captain McConaghey, Assistant Political Agent in Mekran, was accordingly selected to meet the Persian delegate at Charbar, move inland to Bampur and there concert measures with the Deputy Governor for arresting the traffic, the local naval authorities taking special steps to watch this portion of the coast.

The Persian Government expressed objection to Captain McConaghey being accompanied by an Indian escort, and offered to supply a Persian one if so desired; but it was considered that, as there was already a British telegraph guard at Charbar, it would perhaps be possible for Captain McConaghey to make the necessary arrangements as to an escort in consultation with the local Persian officials.

Captain McConaghey reported his arrival at Charbar on the 15th April 1906. He met Captain Barker, H. M. S. *Lapwing*, at Charbar, whose orders were to keep in touch with the British and Persian officials who were concerting measures for checking the arms traffic. Mirza Muhammad Khan, Mudir of Customs, Charbar, received instructions from the Director-General of Customs, Bushire, to assist him in the enquiry.

But a year passed away, and no capture of arms or ammunition was effected, owing to the want of proper co-operation on the part of the Persian officials.

It will be convenient here to notice some correspondence which passed about this time with the Secretary of State on the subject of the arms trade at Maskat and in the Persian Gulf. The profound importance of the whole question was more apparent now than it had ever been before. On the 21st February 1907, Lord Minto's Government addressed a despatch to the Home Government, which is printed as Appendix VII. Briefly stated, its purport was that during the last three or four years there had been an alarming increase in the arms trade at Maskat; that a large number of these arms were undoubtedly reaching Afghanistan and the tribes on the North-West Frontier of India; and that while the presence of a man-of-war at Maskat and its vicinity acted as a deterrent on the traffic, yet this measure, even combined with the patrol of the Mekran Coast by a gunboat, could never be really efficacious; the Government of India accordingly recommended for consideration what appeared to them to be the best course, namely, concerted measures with France for the complete abolition of the arms trade in the future.

Some further correspondence with the Secretary of State on the same subject, which followed about a year later, will also be found summarised in Appendix VII.

It will be seen that on this occasion also the Government of India again suggested that France, if not also the other Powers possessing commercial treaties with Maskat, might be induced, before the forthcoming Brussels Conference (which was expected to meet early in 1908), to agree to an amendment of the treaties, and to the prohibition of the import of arms.

To return now to the arms traffic proceedings on the Mekran coast, and the measures taken to combat them. At the end of May 1907 the Persian Government received news of a third caravan of arms on its way to the frontier, and expressed a hope that the British frontier force would co-operate if asked by the Persian local officials to stop the caravan. His Majesty's Minister replied that only on the written request of the Persian authorities could British troops enter Persian territory. His Majesty's Government informed Sir C. Spring-Rice that the present moment was most inopportune for British troops to enter Persian territory even for the laudable object of intercepting smuggled arms, as it would probably arouse popular feeling and afford another Power a precedent for armed intervention in the north. The Persian Government were to be informed—if they asked for material help—that His Majesty's Government could not consent; but that the Government of India would take all measures to stop the caravan on the Indian side of the frontier; and it was hoped the Persian Government would act likewise on their side of the frontier.



The Government of India about this time considered that a coast patrol from Jask to Charbar by guards of the Indo-European Telegraph Department in telephonic communication with the Department's stations along the coast, would be an effective measure, and orders were accordingly issued for its institution.

Early in March 1907, information having been received that Afghans were collecting in Mekran, with the object of escorting very large consignments of arms across the border, the Political Resident in the Gulf telegraphed (March 14, 1907) inquiring whether in view of the facts (a) that there was no Governor-General in Kerman, and (b) that the Baluchistan Mirs of Persian Mekran were altogether out of hand, our troops might not be authorized to act in Persian territory without reference being made to the Persian Government until after measures had been taken. He also telegraphed to His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, reporting that arms smuggled through small ports into Lar and thence to Bandar Abbas were being freely purchased at the latter port by Afghans for transport to the frontier through Persian Mekran, and requested him to urge the Persian Government to take steps to suppress this smuggling of arms. As a result of further enquiries it appeared that the arms runners proposed to rendezvous at some place in the north and to proceed on their journey to Afghanistan when their party was of sufficient strength to overcome any opposition. It was also rumoured at Jask that, if any guns were captured, the arms runners intended to attack the telegraph station there. To avoid this latter contingency the Government of India telegraphed to the Naval Commander-in-Chief East Indies Station, to send, if possible, two vessels to Jask and Charbar at once; they also telegraphed to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India informing him of the position, and of the proposed despatch of the war vessels to Jask and Charbar. They added that the real danger, however, was at Robat, as the strength in which the Afghans were mustering indicated their intention to attack or mask the detachment at Robat. It was, therefore, proposed temporarily to reinforce the two companies at Robat with two guns and 500 men. The Secretary of State approved the proposal; and a warning was given that the detachment was on no account to enter Persian territory.

These measures were moreover usefully supplemented by other action reported at this time. The British India Steam Navigation Company issued orders prohibiting the conveyance of Afghans by any of their steamers; while the Sultan of Maskat and the French Consul at Maskat both took steps to prevent the sale of arms and ammunition at that place to Afghans. On the 18th April 1908 H. M. S. *Proserpine* captured a dhow containing 1,500 rifles and a large quantity of ammunition off the Mekran Coast. Two days later as two boats from H. M. S. *Proserpine* which had been despatched to search two dhows anchored near Zurfi, were approaching the shore, fire was opened on them by some Afghans concealed close to the beach, one bluejacket being killed and another severely wounded. The fire was returned but with what result is not known. The Naval Commander-in-Chief, who anticipated an attack on the telegraph station at Jask by way of reprisal for the capture of the arms promptly landed 50 marines and a maxim gun crew at that place, and, at the same time, asked the Government of India to despatch a British officer and 50 sepoys to relieve his men. Steps were at once taken to comply with the request; and the detachment left Karachi on the 24th April. This action was approved by the Secretary of State.

The Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf reported, at the end of May 1909, that the Afghans arms-running season and apprehensions as to the safety of the Jask telegraph station was considered to be over, but that the Baluch arms-running seemed to be perennial. He proposed to cease cruising operations on the Mekran coast from about 15th June, when the pearling season in the north commences. This proposal was approved; and the reinforcement which had been sent to Jask was also withdrawn.

Information being received in November 1908 of preparations for a renewal of the arms traffic during that cold weather, the arrangements of the previous year for its suppression were revived—an extra guard of 50 men being also placed at Jask, to prevent reprisals being taken on that telegraph station in revenge for the action taken during the preceding season against the gun-runners.



At the same time the views of the Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf were invited as to the best measures to be adopted for the suppression of the traffic. Both were of opinion that the repetition of the measures taken in the previous year was inadvisable. The Agent to the Governor-General, Baluchistan, thought that the only alternative to complete inaction as regards preventive measures, lay in establishing a strong effective naval and military cordon along the Persian Coast as far as Bandar Abbas, which would really stop arms being landed. In any event it would be necessary to arrange for the protection of our main telegraph stations on the coast and at Robat and Bam.

The Resident in the Persian Gulf was of opinion that the possible alternatives were either (a) a cordon of British troops along the Mekran Coast to act in conjunction with the patrolling of the coast by His Majesty's ships, or (b) the effective blockade of the coast alone, aided, if possible, by the Persian Customs launches manned and commissioned by us, and used by His Majesty's ships as tenders. The military authorities in India, however, considered that the military and political objections to the employment of British troops were insuperable. His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief who was invited to express his opinion on the proposal for extended naval action replied, that, if the Warsangli blockade continued, there would be only one ship available for the Mekran Coast and any other services required in the Gulf should a vessel be required on the Shatt-el-Arab until the end of January. To establish an effective blockade of the coast, seven ships would, in his opinion, be necessary, five being always on the Mekran Coast.

His Excellency was quite in accord with the proposal to employ Persian Customs launches if they were available, but thought that, even after they were obtained, which would probably not be for some considerable time after negotiations with the Persian Government had begun, their engines would probably require some overhauling before they were fit for service.

On the question of the best measures to be adopted during the year 1908-09, His Excellency was of opinion that it was very well known, both by the importers of arms and also by the Afghans, that an Arms Conference was sitting at Brussels and the arms traffic was probably in consequence receiving a renewed stimulus to activity this season. He considered that, unless the safety of the telegraph officials and line demanded a policy of non-intervention, as much activity as possible should be displayed in checking the traffic.

Evidence of the activity of the trade was abundant. On the 7th March 1909 an arms-running dhow, belonging to Omani subjects, but with no flag or papers, was captured off Jask by H. M. S. *Fox*. The vessel contained 350 rifles and 50,000 rounds of ammunition. Under instructions from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, her crew were handed over to the Sultan of Maskat for custody and punishment. As the Sultan did not claim the dhow and seemed inclined to disown the crew, the Government of India ordered that the dhow should be burnt and the arms jettisoned. Five days later, another dhow, flying no flag and without papers, with a cargo of 1,200 rifles and about 125,000 rounds of ammunition, was intercepted on the high seas also by H. M. S. *Fox*. As it was impossible to ascertain this vessel's nationality the Government of India approved the proposal of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to sell the dhow for prize money and to jettison the arms.

As regards the measures to be taken for the suppression of the arms traffic in the Persian Gulf, the Secretary of State expressed his concurrence in the views which the Government of India had telegraphed to the effect that political and financial considerations precluded the use of troops in Persian territory or any great increase of naval activity. The course proposed by the Government of India of continuing naval activity with the ships that were available was approved, and it was decided, in accordance with the recommendation of the British Minister, Tehran, that it was desirable temporarily to withdraw the telegraph staff at Dehaneh to Koh-i-Malik Siah. The Secretary of State added that there was no objection to the temporary retention of troops at Robat or to the reinforcement, if necessary, of the telegraph staff guards along the coast.

After considering the proposals for the suppression of the arms traffic put forward by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf and by His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, the Government of India addressed the Secretary of State on the subject in a despatch which may be summarised as follows (September 2, 1909):—

Negotiations with France having been suspended, there was no prospect in the near future of coming to an arrangement with the French Government for enforcing a prohibition against the importation of arms and ammunition into the territories of Maskat. The traffic with Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier had continued to flourish during the past two years, and the influx of modern rifles had introduced a serious complication into the military and political situation, not only in Afghanistan but also in independent territory on the Indian side of the Durand line.

The policy of the Amir in deliberately encouraging the influx of arms among his own subjects and among the independent tribes on our borders precluded the possibility of finding a solution of the problem in Afghanistan. There was little probability of securing the Sultan's co-operation to check the traffic, until we had shown that we could put an end to the trade on the Mekran coast. Military action along the Persian littoral appeared to be undesirable and unlikely to yield result commensurate with the expenditure involved; the Government of India, therefore, proposed the establishment of an effective naval blockade and recommended that the proposal put forward by His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief to employ on the blockade a force of four 2nd or 3rd class cruisers, with certain supplementary measures, including the establishment of wireless telegraph station at Jask, should be put into execution with the least possible delay and maintained for a full year. As to the cost of the proposals, the view was advanced, with reference to paragraph 313 of the report of the Welby Commission, that any sums over and above the fixed contribution which India already paid towards naval expenditure should fall on the Imperial Government.

In making this proposal the Government of India expressed the opinion that no really satisfactory or permanent solution of the problem could be reached until freedom to take action at Maskat, the head-quarters of the traffic, had been purchased from France. Such freedom might, as had already been suggested, be purchased on the basis of exchanges between British and French territory in India, and it was hoped that advantage might be taken of the present cordial relations with France to bring about a permanent solution of this grave and menacing problem.

His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran informed Sir E. Grey that various aspects of the arms traffic had been discussed with him by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. He considered that there was no doubt that the Persian Government would greatly resent and oppose the introduction of a land cordon of Indian troops along the Mekran Coast, and that such a step would at the same time, afford Russia most inconvenient grounds for delaying the withdrawal of her troops from the north. The Minister, therefore, greatly deprecated the introduction of a land cordon and advised reliance on an effective sea blockade alone.

On the other hand, Sir G. Barclay saw no objection to bluejackets from His Majesty's ships being temporarily landed, either to make good captures of arms or to raid depôts as far as action from the ships would permit. He would not propose to give warning to the Persian Government as to the proposed action. The Minister thought that, in the event of a case arising and the Persian Government complaining, the British Government could bring forward strong grounds in justification of their proceedings, which could not properly be taken advantage of by Russia to justify an expedition in the north, where there was no analogy with the peculiar conditions of the arms traffic in the south. He said that the question of the danger at various points from reprisals from Afghans, which might be greater than in the past, was one which would, doubtless, be considered by the Government of India, and agreed that no effective action whatever was possible on the part of the Persian Government, and that it would be useless to make proposals to them. Sir G. Barclay was informed that the Government of India, agreed in his views and asked whether his views had the concurrence of His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Secretary of State was told that His Excellency the Viceroy and the Naval Commander-in-Chief were agreed that it was important to land parties as suggested by the Minister.

At the commencement of the gun-running season in the winter of 1909-10, the detachment at Jask was increased as in the preceding year by one British officer and 50 men, and in view of it being known that larger parties of Afghans than usual had gone to the Persian Gulf to purchase arms, half a battalion of Native Infantry was despatched to Robat, and the detachment at Charbar and Bandar Abbas were raised to one officer and a hundred men and to one officer and thirty men, respectively. Two maxims and wire entanglement were also sent to Jask and Charbar; while Major Austin, Royal Engineers, was deputed as Intelligence Officer at Jask, and Mr. Gregson of the North-West Frontier Province Police was placed on special duty in connection with the arms traffic generally. Further, a temporary wireless installation was erected at Jask, and effectual communication opened with the war-ships there. Thirty men of the Mekran Levy Corps were also posted here as an escort for the Assistant Superintendent of Telegraphs. And in addition to all these measures, the Officer Commanding at Charbar and Major Austin were authorised to attend Customs House inspections; while the Secretary of State sanctioned the despatch of another hundred men to Jask should the Government of India think them required there.

In December Lord Morley announced that the Admiralty scheme of blockade included the use of six war vessels, a dépôt ship, eight steam-launches or tugs, and the appointment of a special Intelligence Officer. The cost of the three additional ships to be employed was roughly estimated at £ 84,000 for a whole year, and the views of the Government of India were invited as to their share in the expenditure, an estimate of which was required.

Lord Morley was told in reply that so long as the present arrangements with Persia and Maskat as to the disposal of captures continued, it would be useless to undertake a costly blockade. The Government of India urged that the Persian Government should be pressed to give the British Government the right to destroy such captured arms and ammunition as under existing arrangements are made over to Persia. In the event of the Persian Government agreeing, strong pressure might be brought to bear on the Sultan of Maskat, and the right to destroy arms and ammunition consigned to Persia or India could be insisted upon.

If the foregoing was conceded, the Government of India were in favour of adopting the Admiralty scheme of blockade, supplemented by the proposal of His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief to employ troops to strengthen landing parties for the seizure of arms stored in villages near the coast.

As regards the payment of the cost, Lord Morley was told that the Agreement of 1901, which expired in 1906 and had not been renewed, contemplated that India should have the use of additional war vessels on payment of cost of coal only; and that this should be applied to the present case without prejudice as regards the future. His Lordship was informed that the Government of India were prepared to bear the entire cost of Royal Indian Marine boats and launches, but unless they could be relieved of the cost of the additional ships, estimated at £84,000 for one year, the entire position must be reconsidered by them.

Sir G. Barclay told Sir E. Grey, with reference to the foregoing communication that, however desirable it might be that the Persian Government should be induced to forego its rights in order to strengthen British representations to the Sultan of Maskat, it did not appear to him that the present method of dealing with arms, etc., seized within Persian jurisdiction, was in itself likely to militate against the effective working of the proposed blockade. He feared that the argument that the desired concession on the part of Persia would strengthen the British case with Maskat would not carry much weight with the Medjlis, and he had little hope that he could induce the Persian Government to consent to any step which could be interpreted as a further surrender of their sovereign rights.

Meantime H. M. S. *Fox* captured on the Oman coast a dhow with 1,200 rifles and 120,000 rounds of ammunition, and instructions were issued that the dhow and cargo, including arms and ammunition, were not to be surrendered to the Sultan, pending further orders. Early in January 1910, instructions were received from the Secretary of State, in regard to the treatment of captured gun-running dhows.

It was considered undesirable to raise the large general question either with the Sultan of Maskat, or with the Persian Government who had so far laid no claim under their agreement to confiscated cargo. It was held preferable to deal with each case, as it arises, on its merits.

The Naval Commander-in-Chief and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf were informed of Lord Morley's instructions. The former was told that the blockade was sanctioned on the lines originally proposed by him, that the Mekran Levies would co-operate with the Navy, and that the Agent to the Governor-General, Baluchistan, had warned the tribes on the British Baluchistan coast.

As regards reported impending attacks by Afghans on Charbar, it was left to the naval authorities, in communication with the Officer Commanding the troops on the spot, to take necessary action. The Naval Commander-in-Chief was told that raids inland should be limited to the purpose of seizing arms stored in villages and that the Afghans should not be attacked, unless engaged in removing arms, or unless they actually threatened Jask or Charbar. All this while very large captures of arms and ammunition were being effected by war-ships and landing parties; and on the 21st January a force of 14 British and 11 Indian officers, 518 men and 4 mountain guns, were despatched from Bombay to be at the disposal of the Naval Commander-in-Chief for blockade purposes.

The question of the disposal of the various captures of arms now again came under discussion.

Sir G. Barclay reported to Sir E. Grey that, if arms seized on Persian soil were destroyed, the Persian Government might doubtless claim compensation, and he suggested that, if the Government of India were not prepared to pay, orders should be given that arms captured on Persian soil in future should be held at the disposal of the Persian Government. With reference to this, the Government of India represented to Lord Morley that it was due to the impotence of the Persian Government that the British Government had been compelled to undertake repressive measures; that on the Mekran coast the Persian Government had no officer to whom arms could be safely entrusted and that they could not reasonably expect contraband to be transported to Bushire or Bandar Abbas. Lord Morley replied that, if the Persian Government raised the question, Sir G. Barclay had been instructed to reply to them in the sense of the remarks of the Government of India. Meantime he directed that, except when it was clearly necessary for the sake of public example, arms which might be captured on the high seas should not be destroyed but kept, in order that there might be a stock from which the Persian Government could be compensated if they pressed a claim difficult to resist.

M. Neauber, a French dealer in arms at Maskat, had put in a claim for compensation on account of a dhow named *Muzirfa*, bound for Katr, which had been stopped by a British war vessel, but allowed to proceed after an examination of her papers. M. Neauber had agreed to buy the dhow if she were seized by a British war vessel. He maintained that the proclamation by the Sultan of Maskat prohibiting the export of arms from Maskat to Persia or India was mere waste paper, as it had not been communicated to the French Government. In submitting the claim, the French Consul requested its recognition on the ground that it was based on the French treaty which was still in force and that the restrictive measures introduced by the Sultan had not been concurred in by the French Government.

M. Neauber purchased another dhow and despatched her ostensibly for Katr laden with arms and ammunition, under the French flag.

The Government of India proposed to instruct the Political Agent, Maskat, to reply to the French Consul that Government were unable to recognise that M. Goguyer had any claim for compensation for the temporary detention of his goods or for the trifling damage done, due to default of production of a bill of lading.

These instructions were approved by the Secretary of State, who added that naval officers should be warned to avoid seizures in Maskat waters lest the French should get hold of a really good case against us.

Arms merchants having at this stage began to move their arms to Kuwait from Maskat it was strongly urged by Admiral Slade that the proclamation by the

Shaikh of Kuwait of 1900, prohibiting the import into, and export from, Kuwait of arms and ammunition, should be made known widely, and that the Sultan of Maskat should be asked to include Kuwait dhows within the scope of his proclamation. Both Major Trevor and the Admiral thought that the searching of Kuwait dhows and the confiscation of arms and ammunition found on them was essential.

The Secretary of State was informed accordingly and told that the Government of India proposed to issue orders that action might be taken at once under the Kuwait proclamation, also that action should be taken under the Bahrain and Trucial Chiefs' proclamation and notification, prohibiting the import and export of arms and ammunition, and it was suggested that an agreement with Turkey authorising action against dhows which fly the Turkish flag in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman should be concluded.

Lord Morley approved of the proposals as regards Kuwait and Bahrain, and said that a warning of the intended action should be conveyed to the Shaikh of Kuwait, and that he should be told that the British Government rely on his continued loyal co-operation. As regards the proposal relating to Turkey, His Majesty's Ambassador, Constantinople, was being consulted.

The Secretary of State enquired whether something could not be done to induce the Sultan of Maskat to declare the export of arms by sea illegal without passes issued under his authority by a British or other trustworthy official appointed by him as his own employé, or on British recommendation, such passes to be issued at Maskat only, the Sultan prohibiting the export of arms from all other Oman ports.

Admiral Slade, who was consulted, said that an agreement absolutely prohibiting the export of arms by sea in any form was the only one worth pressing on the Sultan, but that this did not seem to come at present within the region of practical politics. He was of opinion that all that was necessary for the destruction of the arms traffic was the Persian Government's authority to prevent arms being landed in Persian territory. Mr. Holland, Political Agent, Maskat, was of opinion that the system of passes would operate restrictively to a small extent if only the Persian and Mekran coast were included in its scope, but would be effectual if Kuwait and Bahrain were included in the system as the remaining legitimate trade would be valueless, but in this case the French Government would complain and he suggested as the best solution either an amicable settlement or action in disregard of the French treaty. The opinion of the Resident in the Gulf was that restrictive measures on export by sea would result in an increase of export by land routes.

In reply to enquiries in regard to the measures for the suppression of the arms traffic, the Secretary of State was informed, in a telegram dated 14th March, that the whole situation had been discussed with Admiral Slade and Colonel Cox, that, up to the present, the blockade had been most successful, and if it was continued the trade would be ruined, whereas if efforts were slackened now the trade would revive by the cold weather.

As regards the proposed arrangement whereby arms and ammunition would be allowed to be exported from Maskat under passes, the Government of India held, for reasons explained, that it was unnecessary at present to supplement the blockade by the pass system. In connection with the proposed territorial concessions to France in India, Lord Morley was informed that the question was being considered, but that, in view of the success of the blockade, it would be better to avoid communication with France until the blockade operations had had their full effect in killing the trade.

The Government of India urged that efforts should be concentrated on the maintenance of an effective blockade on the Persian coast, and that this would be greatly promoted by the installation of wireless telegraphy at Bahrain, Debai and Bushire. Maskat could then be left alone and action simply directed against dhows in Persian waters or cargoes when landed. In this way, by acting as agents for Persia in stopping the import of arms under the agreement of 1897, and not acting ostensibly for our own benefit, international complications with France or other Powers would be avoided.

In connection with the question of reassuring the Sultan of Maskat, the Government of India considered that all that appeared necessary was that the Poli-

tical Officer should watch the Sultan's attitude and give him sufficient comfort to keep him from intriguing with France or Germany, and that no definite sum should be promised or mentioned to him. It was suggested that Colonel Cox should tell the Sultan verbally that the British Government were obliged to persevere with the extermination of the trade on the Persian coast, but would not allow him to be ruined in the process. The Government of India were altogether opposed to giving compensation to arms dealers.

The foregoing views as regards the pass system and the communication to the Sultan were accepted by the Secretary of State, who asked that before any action should be taken as regards wireless telegraphy, an estimate of the cost might be telegraphed to him. Lord Morley said that the French Government would be approached with a view to obtaining their co-operation in the suppression of the arms trade by permitting the Sultan to prohibit import for one year and by allowing British ships to search French dhows engaged in the arms trade. His Lordship said that this should cause no abatement in the rigour of the blockade, but that it must be remembered that, except in British waters, we had no right even to touch French dhows. He added that, if it was thought practicable, the Shaikhs of Bahrain and Mohammerah and the Trucial Chiefs should be urged to seize any consignments of arms landed in their territory and to hand them over to the British authorities, His Majesty's Government undertaking to support the Shaikhs and Chief; in the event of any unpleasantness arising with the French and, if necessary, to give compensation for the arms, or ultimately to restore them to the local rulers, when assured that there was no risk of the arms passing into the hands of the dealers. These instructions were communicated to the authorities concerned.

With reference to the question of searching Turkish dhows engaged in the arms trade, Lord Morley said that His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople considered that no useful result would be obtained by asking the Turkish Government to give us the right of search. Lord Morley added that until the traffic in Turkish dhows became serious, His Majesty's Government did not propose to raise the question; meanwhile His Lordship reminded the Government of India that till the question was settled Turkish dhows were not to be interfered with. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was informed accordingly.

It would perhaps be tedious to mention all the various captures of arms which were reported during the gun-running season of 1909-10. But it may be mentioned that on the 24th April 1910, two dhows carrying about 2,000 rifles, 200 pistols and nearly a million rounds of ammunition were captured off Jask by H. M. S. *Philomel*; and that in view of information that there were signs of a recrudescence of the illicit trade, which had received a temporary blow from the active suppressive measures, also in view of the desirability of making a public example, the Government of India ordered the entire capture to be destroyed.

A memorandum suggesting that the Sultan of Maskat should be empowered to prohibit the import of arms and ammunition into his territories for one year was communicated by His Majesty's Government to the French Government, whose co-operation was asked. The French Foreign Minister in reply suggested the prohibition of import of arms from the beginning of August 1910 for one year, but objected to concede the right of searching French dhows. The Foreign Office observed that the acceptance of this suggestion would be almost equivalent to the admission of the French claim to a *quid pro quo*. His Majesty's Government (telegram, dated 22nd April) invited the views of the Government of India as to (1) the value of one year's prohibition in the circumstances; (2) the *quid pro quo*, supposing that His Majesty's Government cannot avoid admitting the French claim; and (3) the possibility of devising any scheme, whereby, in co-operation with France, legitimate import for local consumption could be provided for and export prevented to prohibited countries. The Government of India replied on the 19th May. Their views were as follows:—

The Government of India were at present in a strong position. The arms trade had been seriously checked by effective blockade, and there was reasonable hope that in time it would be killed.



On the other hand, we were dependent on the good-will of the Persians and if French dhows were to start running in any numbers, awkward complications would ensue. The risk on either score was not great at present, but could not be ignored. In view of the success of the blockade the Government of India thought that it would have been better had the communication to France been postponed until the blockade had killed the trade as suggested before. As, however, the communication had been made, the Government of India had again considered the situation and recommended that the blockade should continue with full rigour and that meanwhile an attempt should be made to get France to show her hand and indicate what *quid pro quo* she required. The Government of India then gave their opinion in regard to the enquiries made by Lord Morley.

(1) Prohibition of import for a year after an interval which would allow Maskat to be flooded with arms and ammunition, and without right of search, was of little practical value *per se*. If, however, France really meant to find a permanent and reasonable settlement, the moral effect would be considerable. The whole question turned on the nature of the *quid pro quo*.

(2) It was necessary to be very cautious at present about compensation. The Government of India were not prepared to say more than that in order to secure a really permanent settlement they would gladly give reasonable compensation. They believed that they could kill the trade by the naval blockade, but the process was costly and might set up friction. They would welcome a reasonable settlement which would relieve them of the expense and trouble of continuing the blockade. As regards cession of territory, the Government of Madras reported that there were no physical difficulties in giving a considerable area of land round Pondicherry and rounding off the French possessions. About this the Government of India said that they would address Lord Morley separately, but they could not, in any case, advise the cession of land round Pondicherry without an exchange for Chandernagore, the loges, and other bits of French land, and that before expressing a final opinion they would wish to ascertain the feelings of the British subjects who would be transferred to French rule.

(3) They agreed with Colonel Cox that they would have to buy the support of France and the Sultan to regulate imports and exports at Maskat, and had no doubt a practical scheme could be devised.

Finally, the Government of India were of opinion that it would be very convenient if the French Government were to send some one to India to carry on all the preliminary negotiations. Many difficulties would disappear in personal discussion.

Action taken at this time by British authorities in two cases connected with measures for the suppression of the arms traffic perhaps deserves notice. In the first case, a steamer named the *Trentham Hall*, was suspected to be running in connection with arms smuggling; and the Naval Commander-in-Chief was asked to watch her, but was told that unless consigned to other than Maskat or Turkish territory in the Persian Gulf, any arms that she might be carrying could not be confiscated.

In the second case a dhow named *Fateh-ul-Khair* carrying the French flag and papers, and purporting to belong to M. Goguyer, a French dealer in arms at Maskat, arrived at Kuwait with a cargo of about 400 rifles and 40,000 rounds of ammunition. According to the Shaikh the cargo was brought in contravention of his prohibition and landed in defiance of his orders. The Shaikh's attitude appeared insincere, but he confiscated the consignment and lodged it in his customs-house under seal. The Resident in the Gulf addressed the Shaikh the matter, informing him that he was fully justified in stamping out the contraband traffic, and that it was not likely that the French Government would support their dependents in smuggling arms into Kuwait, in spite of the Shaikh's well-known proclamation of May 1900. Colonel Cox added that, if any complaint was made, the Shaikh could rest assured that the British Government would support him and uphold his just rights in keeping out contraband.

In the course of the correspondence which had taken place with the Secretary of State in regard to the measures for the suppression of the arms traffic, Lord



Morley had inquired what the cost of wireless installations at Bahrain, Debai and Bushire would amount to.

He was now informed (June 3) that the total cost, exclusive of buildings, furniture and monthly working charges, was set down at Rs. 44,000; furniture and accommodation for the staff, if none could be rented at Debai and Bahrain, Rs. 15,499; while the monthly establishment charges were estimated at Rs. 1,409 for the three stations. It was considered that the apparatus could not be in working order under nine months.

It having transpired that the Secretary of State's sanction to the continuance of the blockade operations extended only till April 1910, and not throughout the summer, as had been understood by the Government of India, the whole position was reviewed, and on the 7th June the Secretary of State was asked to sanction the continuance of the blockade till December 1910, when the position would again be reviewed. The proposal was under consideration, at the close of the period under review the Secretary of State having called for an estimate of cost. With reference to the proposed wireless installations, the Secretary of State enquired whether they were likely to be so effective as to render economy probable in other ways, for example, in dispensing with the service of launches or a ship, should blockade operations be continued. His Lordship also asked if any considerable revenue was likely from the installations. The question was under examination at the close of the period of this summary.

Meantime a matter had occurred which deserves mention. Mir Madat Khan, the Persian Chief of Dizak, wrote in the spring of 1910 to the Baluchistan authorities that in view of the chaos due to absence of government in Persian Baluchistan, he was anxious to hand over Jalk and Dizak to the British Government. Sir H. McMahon proposed replying in polite terms acknowledging the offer, but expressing inability to consider it as being contrary to the boundary agreement with the Persian Government. He suggested the advisability of considering whether the moment was a favourable one for getting the Mir to assist in stopping the traffic in arms in the Dizak and Jalk tracts, adding that this would necessitate the promise of some subsidy. Sir H. McMahon's proposed reply was approved and he was authorized, if a favourable opportunity occurred, to discuss an arrangement for stopping the traffic in arms on the basis of a subsidy up to a limit of Rs. 1,000 annually.

A reply was sent as proposed; but it was subsequently decided to postpone negotiations with Mir Madat regarding the suppression of the arms traffic, as his overtures were possibly due to his waning influence in Jalk and Dizak and his desire to re-establish his position by securing British intervention.

We may now turn to the local history of the various territorial divisions of the Gulf region. Oman, during Lord Curzon's viceroyalty, was the scene of the very serious state of disquiet and general intrigue against British interests, especially on the part of France; but succeeding years have fortunately witnessed the restoration of affairs to a state of calm and the removal of almost all traces of anti-British activity. In fact with the exception of the steps taken to give local execution to the Hague Tribunal's award in the embarrassing French flag case which had arisen in the preceding viceroyalty, there is very little of particular importance to record in regard to this locality.

Among the many efforts made by France during Lord Curzon's viceroyalty to

(1) *Final settlement of the question of the French flag in Oman.*

extend her influence in Oman, was her endeavour to create by the wholesale grant of her flag, a maritime class of Arabs dependent on her protection and subject to her authority. This practice introduced a very serious complication into the political situation in the Gulf region, as apart from its tendency to the spread of French influence, it enabled lawless Arabs to escape from the jurisdiction of their lawful sovereign, and engage in slave or arms traffic with immunity of search from British war-vessels. The Sultan of Maskat, moreover, protested against this invasion of his sovereign rights. After some direct diplomatic discussion in the matter between the British and French Governments in 1903-04, it was eventually decided to submit the whole

question of the French flag in Oman to the Hague Tribunal. The award of that Court was pronounced on the 8th August 1905. It demolished (unanimously) the whole system of an *imperium in imperio*, which the French had so laboriously attempted to erect. Practically all grants of the French flag made after the 2nd January 1892—and these formed a large majority of the extant grants—were declared invalid; the transfer of the French flag, even when regularly granted, to new owners or vessels was prohibited; and it was clearly laid down that the possession of the flag could not in any circumstances confer rights of ex-territoriality or exemption from the Sultan's jurisdiction on shore.

This all but closed the question; it only remained to take steps locally to carry out the provisions of the award. The British and French Governments decided that their respective Consuls should concert together as to the drawing up of a list of Omanis entitled to the French flag and as to the best manner of announcing the award.

M. Laronce communicated the French list of flagholders to Major Grey at Maskat on the 4th March 1906; but certain disagreements arose between the two Consuls; and negotiations dragged on for some months. It is perhaps unnecessary to enter here into the detail of the discussion; suffice it to say that Major Grey and M. Laronce were unable to agree as to the list of persons to be regarded as entitled to fly French flags according to the Hague Award. They, however, agreed that, if and when an arrangement could be arrived at, the best method of communicating the result of the arbitration, to the subjects of the Sultan would be by means of a proclamation to be issued by His Highness.

On the 5th July 1906 the Secretary of State telegraphed that the French Government were pressing an early settlement of the question; and that prolonged negotiations might cause undesirable friction, while, as regards the future, the whole question would, in a comparatively short time, come to an automatic end with the death of the present flag-holders. Later, on the 13th August 1906, His Majesty's Government intimated that they had decided as an act of friendship to accept the French list without further question, and also to concede that the flag of any dhow on the list that had been lost, destroyed or otherwise disposed of, should be transferred to one of the other dhows belonging to the same owner provided always that the number of dhows now to be authorized should in no case be exceeded. As regards the jurisdiction, the inviolability of a dhow would not cease in Maskat waters and a subject of the Sultan would come under Maskat jurisdiction as soon as he landed in Oman, but if the Omani belonging to a French-protected dhow were accused of crime on the high seas, no objection could be taken to his transshipment, to some French port for trial, nor would it be reasonable to object if the accused were temporarily landed merely in order to enable the French Consul to make arrangements with this object. Objection, however, would be taken to the trial of such an Omani by the French Consul at Maskat. Further, the French Government would be asked to notify to the Sultan the papers that were transferred and would also be asked to furnish an annual list of surviving flag-holders and dhows, a copy of the notifications and lists being given to the British Consul. No further negotiations between the Consuls would thus be necessary.

The British memorandum, containing these terms, was presented to the French Government on the 22nd August 1906.

The French Government replied in a memorandum dated the 5th November 1906.

They agreed, subject to certain provisos, to the conditions on which the British Government, in their memorandum, had stated their willingness to accept M. Laronce's list of dhows and flag-holders; M. Laronce's opinion should be final after he had made a fresh examination, in conjunction with Major Grey, of the doubtful cases. The Secretary of State in addressing the Foreign Office on the subject stated that it would have been more satisfactory if, as proposed in the British Memorandum, the French Government had undertaken to satisfy themselves as to the claims in question, but he did not think it of essential importance to resist the French proposals in this respect. He was strongly of opinion, however, that the claims that Omanis in the service of French residents

in Maskat territory were entitled, under the Treaty of 1844, to fly the French flag, should be resisted. The acceptance of this principle would make it possible for the French Consul to issue the flag to any person who could be colourably represented as the employé of a French resident, and thereby the settlement effected by the decision of the Arbitral Tribunal would lose its finality.

Paragraphs 9 to 14 of the French Memorandum made certain reservations as to—

- (1) the case of crimes, etc., committed by an Omani on the high seas, while sailing in a dhow flying the French flag ;
- (2) the case of six dhow-owners in Zanzibar covered by the Agreement on the 13th May 1904.

As regards the second of these cases, it was observed that the French Memorandum claimed that these six persons were French *protégés* and as such entitled, under the French Treaty with Maskat of 1844, to the benefits on land of the principle of extritoriality. Both those points appeared to be of minor importance.

After consultation with the Government of India on the subject, His Majesty's Government, on the 13th March 1907, communicated a note to M. Cambon in reply to his memorandum of the 5th November 1906 containing the reservations of the French Government in the matter of the application of the Arbitral Award. His Majesty's Government asked for an explicit statement of the nature and scope of the reservation which the French desired to make as regards the right of Omanis in the employ of Frenchmen in Oman to fly the French flag.

On the 14th May 1907, the Secretary of State for India telegraphed the French reply to the note of 13th March 1907. The French Government interpreted as follows the stipulation made by them in their memorandum of 8th November 1906 regarding Omanis in French service. Any French resident in Maskat owning dhows would have the right of causing them to be navigated under the French flag even if they were manned only by natives in his service. But the right to grant in future to natives of Oman authorization to fly the French flag on dhows that were their personal property was not claimed even if such natives should be in the service of a French resident. His Majesty's Government considered that this interpretation might be accepted as satisfactory if formally accepted by the French. They asked for the views of the Government of India on the matter.

The Government of India replied that the French Government's interpretation might in their opinion be accepted as satisfactory.

In a memorandum communicated to M. Cambon on the 6th August, His Majesty's Government stated that they were willing to accept the French reservations as to—

- (1) the finality of M. Laronce's opinion after a fresh examination of the list of dhows and flag-holders ;
- (2) the jurisdiction of the French Consul over crimes committed by an Omani on the high seas while sailing in a dhow flying the French flag, and
- (3) the status of the six Zanzibari dhow-holders.

They were also willing to agree to the clause in the memorandum of the 8th November 1906 respecting the grant of the right to fly the French flag to Maskatis in the service of French citizens resident in Oman, provided that the interpretation of this clause given in M. Cambon's memorandum of the 26th April were formally accepted by the French Government, and also on the understanding that natives navigating dhows entitled to fly the French flag under this special agreement would not have other privileges than those conceded to masters and crews of dhows entitled under the Award to fly the French flag, unless they came under the category of persons "actually in the service of the French," referred to in Article IV of the French Treaty with Maskat of 1844.

Finally, His Majesty's Government stated that they would be glad if the French Government would agree to instruct the French Consul at Maskat to furnish annually to his British Colleague a separate list of dhows owned by French citizens as well as a list of persons entitled to fly the French flag, in return for similar lists which would be furnished to him by His Majesty's Consul.

On the 9th January 1908 the Secretary of State telegraphed that the French Government had formally accepted the proposals made in the last two paragraphs of the memorandum of the 6th August, and directed that outstanding details should be settled in conjunction with the French Consul at Maskat. Major Grey was instructed to act accordingly and on the 8th February he submitted correspondence showing the measures taken for the settlement of the final details.

On the 15th March 1908 the Secretary of State was informed that the Government of India approved Major Grey's final settlement with the French Consul and it was suggested that the French Government should be approached with a view to the simultaneous acceptance by the two Governments of the settlement. The Secretary of State intimated on the 2nd June that the proclamation which the Consul at Maskat proposed to circulate in Oman had received the approval of the French Government who suggested early publication. The Political Agent at Maskat was instructed accordingly, but, on account of the sudden death of the French Consul, it was considered desirable by the Government of India to postpone action.

The Political Agent at Maskat subsequently (31st December 1908) reported that, after consultation with the French Consul, he had furnished the Sultan of Maskat with copies of the Proclamation for acceptance and issue. He further added that he, accompanied by Bedr-bin-Seif, would proceed to Sur in H. M. S. *Redbreast* after the *Id* in order to publish the Proclamation there.

In January 1908, the Italian Government expressed to His Majesty's Government their intention to found at Maskat a regular official Consular Agency, and subsequently intimated the appointment of Captain Crispi as their Agent.

The Italian Government asked for the co-operation locally of the British Government, both with reference to the Agent's ordinary duties and as regards the arms traffic.

In the opinion of the Political Resident at Bushire there were no adequate grounds for the acceptance of a Consul and a trusted and secret Native Agent would be much more likely to effect the object in view. He enquired whether the matter could not be postponed until the close of the forthcoming Arms Traffic Conference at Brussels.

These views were approved and put forward; with the result that the Italian Government agreed to defer a decision in the matter for the present. But the Brussels Arms Conference being postponed, the Italian Government revived the question in October 1908; representing that in view of the remote prospect of a settlement of the arms traffic difficulty at Maskat, they needed the presence there of Captain Crispi as their Agent at once.

They stated that his mission would have no political aims, but would furnish valuable information, and, in the circumstances, was the only means available to them to take steps to check the important arms traffic between Maskat and Somaliland where the attitude of the Mullah made the matter urgent. The Government of India expressed the opinion that it was important to exclude an Italian Agent, if possible, at any rate until the result of the Arms Conference was known; and added that it would be worth while to concert special measures to secure the objects of the Italian Government by utilising the support and co-operation of the British Agent at Maskat, who could telegraph all the information which could be collected regarding the arms traffic to Aden for transmission to the Italian authorities in Somaliland.

In November 1908, the Secretary of State intimated that the Italian Government, in deference to the wishes of His Majesty's Government, had decided to

send to Maskat a Native Agent instead of an Italian Consular Agent ; and it was subsequently arranged with the Italian Government that the Political Agent at Maskat should furnish full information regarding the arms traffic, and render any assistance that might be suggested by the Italian authorities ; while the Italian Agent would remain a simple confidential informer, and be limited in his duties to the repression of the traffic in arms ; further he was to act always in consultation with the British Consul, and was to be introduced by the latter to the Sultan on arrival at Maskat. One, Umberto Omar, was eventually appointed as Italian Agent at Maskat, and left for that place in February 1909.

In connection with the arms traffic between Maskat and Somaliland, mention may concurrently be made here  
 (3) *Italian seizure of Maskat dhow.* of the case of the seizure on December 22, 1908, of a dhow bound for Mombassa, and flying the flag of the Sultan of Maskat, which was seized by an Italian steamer near Ras Hafun, just south of Socotra Island, on the African coast. The Italian Lieutenant, who was in command of the steamer, was said to have taken down the flag and destroyed it. The dhow carried five rifles, under written permission from the Sultan. Four of these were landed at Sur, on the Oman coast, south-east of Maskat, the fifth being retained by one of the crew unknown to the Nakhoda of the dhow. This rifle was confiscated by the Italian authorities. The Nakhoda assessed his damages at 10,008 dollars. But the Sultan on scrutiny reduced this sum to 8,528 dollars ; and informed the Political Agent at Maskat that, in his opinion, the Nakhoda ought to be granted a free passage for himself and a new crew by steamer from Bombay to Aden, where the dhow had been removed under the orders of the Italian Consul-General.

The local Italian authorities offered to restore the dhow on certain conditions, which they asked the Political Agent at Maskat to press the Sultan to accept. The chief of these conditions was that the legality of the seizure should be formally recognized, and that all claim to compensation should be waived. If these conditions were not accepted the matter would be referred to a prize court.

The Sultan indignantly refused these terms, and asked for the special support of the British Government ; which the Political Resident in the Gulf was of opinion should certainly be accorded to His Highness, in view of the action of the British Government in the French flag case (*quod vide*).

The facts of the case were reported to the Secretary of State for India on the 21st May by the Government of India, who expressed the opinion that the action of the Italian authorities was calculated to prejudice the success of our attempts to obtain the Sultan's co-operation in the suppression of the arms traffic and might lead to the revival of the use of foreign flags by the Sultan's subjects, a practice which it was to the interests of both the English and Italian Governments to prevent. In view of the friendly desire to co-operate hitherto evinced by the Italian Government, they trusted that a representation to them might result in obtaining reparation for the Sultan and compensation for the losses sustained by him.

Diplomatic negotiations followed. His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome was instructed to urge the Italian Government to give immediate orders for the release of the dhow, so that it might return to its home port before the commencement of the monsoon. The Italian Government in reply traversed the British statement of the facts, and added information justifying the seizure ; but in deference to the Sultan of Maskat, offered to release the dhow if the Sultan and the owner accepted the amicable solution already proposed, which included an acknowledgment of the legality of the seizure and an agreement to forego all claims to compensation.

But no settlement was reached ; and in the end of July 1909 it was reported that the case had been submitted by the Italian Consul-General at Aden to the Italian Court at Massowah.

On the 7th February 1910, a memorandum was received from the Italian Government, which, after arguing at length the points on which the Italian Government relied to justify the action of their officers in regard to the seizure of the dhow

*Khadra*, stated that it was not possible to suspend the legal process which was in course, but that, appreciating the necessity of conciliating the Sultan of Maskat, the Italian Government would be prepared to suspend the execution of the sentence, provided that the Sultan and the Nakhoda of the dhow agreed to the conditions which the Italian Government had already proposed by way of compromise and that they would sign the declaration then asked for recognizing the legality of the seizure and renouncing any further claims on that account.

His Majesty's Government considered that it was useless to argue the merits of the case with the Italian Government any further, as they would probably raise the question of the *locus standi* of the British Government; and it was ultimately decided in consultation with the Government of India that the best course was to await the result of the pending judicial proceedings of the Italian prize Court at Massowah. The Government of India's view was that the Sultan, who felt most acutely in regard to the case, would resent being compelled to endorse, under pressure from the British Government a solution which he would consider humiliating and hard, even more than he would resent an adverse decision of a Prize Court.

His Majesty's Government communicated to Sir R. Rodd, the British Ambassador at Rome, the report submitted by the Government of India, in the matter, and instructed him to explain to the Italian Government the attitude of the Sultan as stated therein, and to inform them that His Majesty's Government had received their reply with great disappointment. His Majesty's Government had hoped that, having regard to the importance of the question of the arms traffic to the interests of both countries, the Italian Government would have looked at the broad issue involved rather than at legal technicalities; and they had been prepared, if the Italian Government had shown an inclination to share this view to use their good offices with the Sultan of Maskat in order to bring him to a reasonable frame of mind and to ensure that incidents of the kind should not recur. It was in this spirit that His Majesty's Government offered to try to induce the Sultan to acknowledge the technical legality of the action of the local Italian authorities, provided that the Italian Government were willing to grant some compensation to the Sultan and to the owner of the dhow. Such compensation, His Majesty's Government thought, might be paid on the ground of equity alone, and irrespective of the result of any judicial enquiry as to the technical legality of the seizure. They further considered that, even if the technical legality of the seizure were admitted, the penalty exacted, *viz.*, the confiscation of the dhow and its cargo, was out of all proportion to any offence that had been committed, and they had put forward their suggestion as a possible solution which would meet the desire of the Italian local authorities for legal sanction of their action, and would at the same time satisfy the material interests of the Sultan and the Nakhoda. It appeared, however, that the Italian Government preferred to press to its extreme conclusion a case which, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, could not, from the point of view of equity, be regarded as a strong one. His Majesty's Government feared that the result must be to bring upon the Italian Government—and to some extent upon themselves—the ill-will of the Sultan, who had it in his power to cause both parties a good deal of inconvenience, and who, if his subjects attempted reprisals, would now have no inducement to restrain them. It was considered that such a line of action might very seriously affect the attitude of the Sultan towards the suppression of the arms traffic, and, if the Italian Government maintained their view as set forth in their memorandum, His Majesty's Government had no alternative but to dissociate themselves from it and from its consequences.

A note in this sense was addressed to the Italian Government (May 22); but no reply has yet been received.

The necessity for the introduction of reforms in the Maskat Customs and

(4) *Reform of the Maskat Customs and Finances.*

Financial Administration had long been recognized by the Government of India, and, early in 1905, when the state of the Customs seemed to be favourable for the adoption of reforms by the Sultan, the Government of India addressed the Secretary of State in regard

to the proposals they desired to put before His Highness. The chief of these was the appointment of a trained British official as head of the Maskat Customs, but in subordination to the Sultan's authority. It was also proposed that any difference of opinion between the Sultan and this official should be referred for arbitration by the Political Agent. His Majesty's Government replied that they saw no objection to the appointment of an official recommended by the Government of India for the supervision of the Customs, but considered the reference of matters of dispute to the Political Agent an infringement of the Sultan's independence. They desired, however, that the matter should be held over till the termination of the Hague Arbitration in the French flag case.

Major Grey subsequently reported that the Sultan had, by borrowing from various sources, broken his agreement to borrow only from the Government of India.

The Sultan also asked for a loan of Rs. 20,000 in order to send members of his family on pilgrimages, and both Majors Cox and Grey recommended the grant of this on the condition of its forming part of a general scheme of financial reform. The Government of India accordingly instructed the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to explain to His Highness, if he again broached the subject of a loan, that the Government of India could make it only on the condition that a trained official were borrowed from the Indian Government as head of the Customs, and that the loan should form part of a scheme for the reform of the finances.

The proposals for the reform of the Customs made to the Sultan were not cordially received; and in accordance with the instructions from the Secretary of State, the question of a loan to His Highness was dropped till the termination of the Hague Arbitration Award negotiations.

Major Cox subsequently suggested that, since His Majesty's Government saw objections to raising the question of the reorganisation of the Maskat Customs on the basis of a substantial loan, in his opinion it would be advisable to make a loan of Rs. 20,000 unconditionally in order to avoid a financial crisis; and as it seemed possible that to withhold help would most likely drive the Sultan for relief to outside sources, probably French, in the person of M. Goguyer, the arms dealer, the Government of India considered it advisable to accept the proposal, and they accordingly enquired from the Secretary of State whether there would be any objection to advancing, without political conditions, the small sum of Rs. 20,000 repayable from the Maskat subsidy.

His Majesty's Government sanctioned the proposal (April 9, 1906); but the Sultan failed to avail himself of the sum thus placed at his disposal, preferring instead, apparently, to raise small sums from anyone who would lend them to him.

The question of the revision of the Maskat Commercial Treaty of 19th March 1891 had come up for consideration in 1903, when the Government of India considered it desirable to arrange for a new treaty with the Sultan. The draft treaty, as approved by the Government of India in consultation with the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, had been sent to the India Office but, before finally approving the terms of the draft, the Indian Government had been desired by the Secretary of State to await the observations of the Foreign Office and to submit for the approval of His Majesty's Government the terms of the treaty before signature. The final draft was transmitted to the India Office on the 6th July 1905; and, on the 10th November 1905, the Secretary of State intimated the approval by His Majesty's Government of its terms and authorized the opening of negotiations with the Sultan on the subject. Accordingly on 10th December 1905 these instructions were communicated to the Political Resident and to the Political Agent at Maskat, who were directed to report when it appeared advisable to begin negotiations. No further progress has been made in the matter.

On the 3rd April 1909, the Political Agent at Maskat reported to Major Cox that the American Mission in Maskat had claimed the right to open a dispensary at Mutrah. His Highness the Sultan, who had just raised a subscription for the construction of a Maskat and Mutrah

(5) *Maskat Commercial Treaty.*  
(6) *Opening of a dispensary at Mutrah by the American Mission in Maskat.*



hospital, and feared that the missionaries might interfere in administrative matters, objected to the proposal and had refused permission. In spite of the refusal, Dr. Thoms of the mission occupied a house at Mutrah. The Sultan then appealed to the Political Agent at Maskat for the diplomatic support of the British Government, and on the 6th May the Government of India addressed the Secretary of State on behalf of His Highness, expressing the hope that His Majesty's Government would represent the matter in the proper quarter with a view to the recall of the doctor by the Mission.

In August it was reported that the United States Government had appointed an American as Consul at Maskat; and on the 22nd September His Majesty's Government intimated that the United States Government had instructed their newly appointed representative to urge the claim of Dr. Thoms on the same footing as that of other missionaries at Maskat, and to settle the matter with due regard to the enjoyment of equal opportunity and America's Treaty rights. The United States Government could not decide on Dr. Thoms' claim until the Consul had reported on the situation. The Secretary of State remarked that equal opportunity was interpreted to mean equal opportunity for American missionaries with those of other countries. His Lordship added that the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf should urge the Sultan to accept a reasonable settlement if such were proposed by the American Consul, and he directed that, if the settlement was not acceptable, a report of the facts should be sent, bearing in mind that the question of interference must be delicate, and that the Resident had no *locus standi*. Finally, Lord Morley said that, until the facts were known, it was impossible to promise any support to the Sultan, who should be warned by the Resident to adopt a reasonable attitude.

In November 1909, Mr. Ray, the newly-appointed American Consul at Maskat, opened negotiations with the Sultan on the subject of the American mission medical work at Maskat. The Consul claimed that an American missionary doctor was on the same footing as any other doctor, and that the American Government had invariably held that missionaries were traders within the sense of the word as employed in treaties. The Sultan of Maskat expressed his willingness to accept any doctor accredited by the United States Government, but Mr. Ray declined to allow any distinction in the classification of doctors, and contended that if the Sultan was willing to accept one doctor, by implication, doctors in general must be acceptable to him. On these grounds the Consul maintained his request that the Sultan's objections to the establishment of an American hospital in Mutrah should be withdrawn.

The Government of India, in laying the matter before the Secretary of State for India, expressed the opinion that, if His Majesty's Government held that the contentions of the American Consul were in conformity with international custom, further intervention in British interests and in those of the Sultan would, doubtless, be difficult. If, however, it were found possible to support the Sultan, and if His Majesty's Government were of opinion that their influence could be usefully exercised with the United States Government, the Government of India pointed out that a favourable opportunity for the withdrawal of the American missionary doctor would be afforded when the latter proceeded on leave in March next.

In addressing Mr. Bryce, the British Ambassador at Washington, on the subject, His Majesty's Government stated that an examination of the sources of information at their disposal did not show that they had ever held missionaries to be traders for treaty purposes, and that it did not appear to them that missionaries properly belonged to that category. The objections raised by the Sultan to Dr. Thoms' undertaking appeared, moreover, to be reasonable and just from the Sultan's point of view, and it was desirable, on general grounds, that His Majesty's Government should uphold the authority of His Highness by supporting him in the attitude which he had adopted. At the same time, the fact that His Majesty's Government had no grounds for official intervention in the matter made the question of taking steps on the Sultan's behalf a delicate one. In view of all the circumstances, they were of opinion that an effort should be made to effect a friendly compromise between the Sultan and the United States Government. They accordingly requested Mr. Bryce to explain orally to the Secretary of State of the United States that the experience of the British Government, extending over a considerable

time, had convinced them that the success of any doctor at Maskat was constantly dependent on the Sultan's goodwill, and that the presence of a doctor at the American Mission in opposition to the Sultan's wishes was likely to hamper the Mission in the good work which it was already doing. If it could be arranged, during Dr. Thoms' absence on leave, that a doctor, unconnected with missionary work (who would incidentally have the right to take private practice at Mutrah if he wished), should be placed in charge of the American Consulate, it seemed probable that he would be able to win the Sultan's confidence, and that by degrees the latter's opposition to the working in Mutrah of a doctor more closely connected with the Mission's work would disappear of itself. Mr. Bryce was to add that His Majesty's Government were in the fullest sympathy with American missionary enterprise at Maskat; but that, feeling that Dr. Thoms, in opening a dispensary at Mutrah in opposition to the Sultan's wishes, was hindering rather than advancing that work, they had thought it right to approach the United States Government with regard to the question.

No reply has yet been received to this communication.

Prior to June 1873, the patients at Maskat had to attend for treatment

(7) *Hospital at Maskat.* at the Agency Surgeon's private house. This practice was, however, found to be inconvenient and the Government of India authorized the rental of a separate house for the dispensary; but the sanction so accorded was not acted on as His Highness the Sultan shortly afterwards offered a house in the town, free of charge, for the purpose. The offer was accepted and the house continued to be so occupied until April 1907 when it was dismantled owing to the fact that it was unsafe. The dispensary was then moved first to the Hospital Assistant's house and later to the Government quarters belonging to the consular Dragoman and the Postmaster.

The Agency at Maskat reported that this new arrangement was in every way unsatisfactory; the quarters were small, dirty and insanitary, and the work of the hospital was carried on with the greatest difficulty. At the same time the demands for medical assistance showed a continuous increase; there was a total attendance of some 1,800 (old and new) patients each month and the small number of beds available for indoor patients was constantly filled. European patients had to be accommodated in the house of the Agency Surgeon. The local authorities in consequence proposed to construct a new building, and to meet the cost involved partly by contributions from His Highness the Sultan and the public at Maskat, and partly from contributions from Naval funds and from the Government of India. In view of the special circumstances of the case, the interest taken by His Highness the Sultan and the local community of Maskat in the matter, and the political advantages likely to be derived from the new hospital, Lord Minto's Government sanctioned a grant of Rs. 20,000 towards the construction of the building and the purchase of equipment for the hospital on the following conditions :—

- (i) that, on the completion of the new building, the quarters in which the hospital had hitherto been located would be definitely handed over for the use of the Agency clerks;
- (ii) that a definite arrangement would be made whereby an equivalent amount of accommodation would be reserved in the new hospital for Government officials;
- (iii) that the liability of Government in respect of recurring expenditure would be limited to a fixed annual grant of Rs. 900 to be expended at the discretion of the Political Agent and His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Maskat; and
- (iv) that the proposal would not involve any increase in the present medical establishment of the Maskat Agency, costing Rs. 1,800 per annum.

3. On the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief, His Majesty's Ships and Vessels, East Indies Squadron, the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty also sanctioned a donation of Rs. 2,000 from Naval funds, subject to the satisfactory completion of the hospital, and an annual contribution of Rs. 250, subject to the receipt of favourable reports as to its maintenance from the Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies Station.

On the 10th May 1908, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported the conclusion of an important agreement, Arabistan. by the provisions of which the Shaikh of Mohammerah and the Bakhtiari Khans bound themselves to act together in loyal service to the Government and people of Persia so long as the concessions held by them were not interfered with and taxation was not increased; otherwise they would unite in resistance. The contracting parties informed His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah that the agreement would guarantee the safety of the country, and specially that of the Ispahan road, and that they had chosen him as arbiter in the event of disputes between them.

In view of the anxiety displayed by the Shaikh of Mohammerah and the Bakhtiari Khans for the protection of, and intervention by, the British Government in the event of aggression, foreign or internal, following on a possible political break up of Persia, the Secretary of State for India telegraphed on the 12th June 1908 asking for the views of the Government of India on the character and extent of the assurances which it might be desirable to give to the Shaikh and the Khans. In regard to the Shaikh it was suggested that the assurances against foreign aggression already given by Sir A. Hardinge in 1902 should be renewed and should be made applicable to the Shaikh's successors. This, coupled with the statement that such aggression would constitute an infringement of Persian integrity, to the maintenance of which His Majesty's Government were pledged, would be sufficient as regards external aggression. The opinion of the Government of India was further asked as to the best method of strengthening our former assurances as regards encroachment on the Shaikh's present autonomy by the Tehran Government. With reference to the Bakhtiari Khans it was proposed, in view of their recent unsatisfactory behaviour towards the British enterprise in their country, not to go beyond an expression of friendly sympathy, in view of the possibility of any other assurance being utilised by them to create difficulties with the Persian Government.

The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was of opinion that the communication proposed in the Secretary of State's telegram was sufficient, but he suggested as regards the maintenance of the present status of the Shaikh, that he might be reminded that relations between himself and the British had been close and sympathetic in the past, and that it might be intimated to him that, so long as he and his successors adhered to these traditions and showed themselves ready to promote the legitimate interests of British commerce and enterprise in their jurisdiction, the British Government would continue to regard the maintenance of their prosperity and present status as being important in British interests. He might therefore rest assured that we would be disposed to give him and his successors the utmost support compatible with strict loyalty on their part to the Persian Government and with our own engagement to respect the integrity of Persia. We might, in return for such an assurance, ask the Shaikh to undertake, on behalf of himself and his successors, to take private friendly counsel with us before committing themselves in connection with concessions, loans, or other engagements to Foreign Powers or nationals.

As regards the Bakhtiaris, Major Cox agreed with the opinion expressed by Captain Lorimer, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz, that the idea mooted in 1904 in connection with tribal levies would not be practicable under any conditions compatible with our own engagement to respect the integrity of Persia, and the present status of the Bakhtiari, and that, as the Khans aimed at complete independence, any definite undertaking or agreement would in all probability be frequently appealed to by them for their own purposes. In view, however, of the apparently bright prospects of the oil industry and the possibility of profitable irrigation, which greatly emphasised the importance to us of strengthening our own position in the region in question and of keeping the influence and enterprise of other Powers at a distance, Major Cox thought that the Khans might be given a verbal assurance on the lines of that suggested in the case of the Shaikh of Mohammerah, adding the warning that such assurances applied to duly constituted representatives of the Bakhtiari tribes and not to individual Khans with whose family dissensions we were not concerned. Such an assurance would not seem to be opposed to the terms of the Anglo-Russian Convention.

The Government of India expressed to the Secretary of State for India their agreement with Major Cox's views as regards Mohammerah, but they did not consider that it would be safe to enter into negotiations with the Bakhtiari Khans and were not prepared, therefore, to give the verbal assurances proposed by Major Cox.

Sir E. Grey informed Mr. Marling (31st July 1908) that it would be undesirable at present to give the Bakhtiari Khans any assurances beyond an expression of friendly sympathy, but that, in the case of the Shaikh of Mohammerah, the general assurances already given to him in 1902 (*viz.*, that the British Government would protect Mohammerah against naval attack by a Foreign Power, whatever pretext for such action might be alleged, and also, that so long as the Shaikh remained faithful to the Shah and acted in accordance with the advice of the British Government, they would continue to give him their good offices and support), might be repeated and extended to his successors. It might further be pointed out that His Majesty's Government had engaged to respect the independence and integrity of Persia; this involved the maintenance of the *status quo* in that country and included the continuance of the Shaikh's present state of autonomy. External aggression on him would therefore constitute an infringement of Persian integrity, which was recognized by the Anglo-Russian Convention. Mr. Marling was directed to instruct His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire to address a communication to the Shaikh in the above sense, and His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Ahwaz to take an opportunity of offering to the Khans an assurance of the friendly sympathy of His Majesty's Government towards the Bakhtiari tribe.

From a conversation which the Shaikh had with Major Cox at the end of December 1908, it appeared that he was getting anxious as to the effect of the revolutionary movement in Persia on his own position. He represented that the greater part of Persia was completely out of control, that the payment of revenue was being very generally suspended by the local chiefs and peasantry, and that, if he had only his present and personal interest to consider, he was in a strong position to refuse revenue, to turn out the Belgian Customs, and to avail himself of other openings in a similar direction, as opportunity arose. So far from pursuing such a policy, he claimed that he was neglecting these convenient opportunities simply in order not to injure his position with the British Government. He begged once again for our constant and vigilant solicitude for his best interests and candid advice as to the policy he should adopt. Major Cox and Mr. McDouall, Consul at Mohammerah, endeavoured to reassure and persuade him that the line of conduct which he had hitherto pursued was the correct one, and that perseverance in it would be best calculated to enable the British Government to support his interests.

The Shaikh's position was a difficult one, as both parties were appealing to him in the name of Persia, and he was uncertain whether to side with the Nationalists or with the Shah. It was especially on this point that he sought advice. Major Cox, however, was instructed, in pursuance of the policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of Persia, to return no reply to the Shaikh's request for advice.

With reference to the customs, the Shaikh informed Mr. McDouall that when the British Government persuaded him to accept the customs arrangement the whole country between Mohammerah and Lingah was waiting to see what action he would take. The firman under which the customs was established at Mohammerah declares that the directorship is vested in him; but that, as he had not the necessary men, the Persian Government would appoint a director and an assistant and that the rest of the staff would be appointed by the Shaikh in consultation with them. The first directors carried out these stipulations. They recommended men to him and he sanctioned their engagement; but they gradually referred less and less to him, the last director appointed one or two men without consulting him, and the present one had made sweeping changes in the staff without any reference to him at all.

The Shaikh went on to explain that, if the customs receipts continued to be forwarded to Tehran, Nationalist resentment would be unrestrainable; that he, as head of the Mohammerah customs, would be made responsible for the receipts, and that, if the British Government were unable to intervene or to give him definite

advice, he would have to ask the Belgian Director to retain the receipts in the custom-house premises under adequate custody until matters became quieter. Sir G. Barclay informed the Political Resident that the Shaikh's proposal appeared unobjectionable.

Subsequently in March 1909 the Shaikh represented that the assurances which had been given to him in December 1908 only safeguarded him so long as Persia remained on her feet, and, in order to cover the contingency of Persia ceasing to be a sovereign state and of occupation or intervention by Foreign Powers, made the following categorical requests:—

*Firstly*, to be assured that the British Government would not allow any Persian régime whether absolute or constitutional, to disturb the *status quo* in regard to himself or his successors ;

*Secondly*, that so long as he fulfilled his obligations to them the British Government would not disturb it ; and

*Thirdly*, that His Majesty's Government would oppose any power attempting to do so.

When the Shaikh realized from Major Cox's replies to his enquiries that a dynastic guarantee could not be given, he earnestly begged that the assurances already given to him might at least be extended to his immediate offspring, provided that they gave satisfaction. He was quite ready to satisfy the British Government as to the concurrence of the tribunal of Shaikhs.

Major Cox was instructed to inform the Shaikh that His Majesty's Government were ready to give him the same support against any encroachment on his rights as was promised him in 1902, whatever change of Government there might be in Persia. Major Cox was also to remind him that the assurances of His Majesty's Government had already been extended to his successors, so that, as his offspring would presumably succeed him, the assurances did in fact already apply to them. If, however, this did not satisfy the Shaikh, there was no objection to extending the guarantee already given, to "his heirs and successors."

The Constitutionlists continued to exert very strong pressure on the Shaikh to espouse the popular cause, and, on the 22nd March, Sardar Assad visited Mohammerah and pressed the Shaikh to declare for the constitution. On the 26th March, Major Cox, the Political Resident, who had arrived at Mohammerah, reported that the Shaikh had informed him that the situation there had been rendered much more critical by the news of the recent success of the Nationalists at Bandar Abbas and Bushire, and he anticipated that these unruly levies would now turn their attention to his outlying ports of Dilam, Hindian, etc., and that he could not hold out much longer, unless he could be assured that the British Government would give him effective support in resisting the Nationalists, and would protect him against the subsequent consequences of his so doing; he added that he must take some course which would save his face with both parties. Major Cox replied that he had no power to give any such guarantee.

Early in April 1909, the Shaikh received telegrams from Samsam at Ispahan and Saiyid Murtaza of Bushire, calling on him to prevent the Darya Begi, who was at Baghdad, from returning to Bushire. The Samsam also pressed the Shaikh to remit the customs receipts to Ispahan for the expenses of a march on the capital. To the latter request the Shaikh replied that the British authorities had officially notified him that the Mohammerah customs must not be touched, being pledged to them. As regards the former question, the Shaikh, who had at the same time been appealed to by the authorities at Tehran to provide the Darya Begi with 300 riflemen, was again urged by Sir G. Barclay, whose advice he asked, not to mix himself up in party politics. Major Cox also instructed His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah to advise the Shaikh privately to take a trip up the Karun when the Darya Begi was nearing Mohammerah.

The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf having communicated to the Shaikh of Mohammerah the assurances granted him by His Majesty's Government,

(3) *Assurance to the Shaikh of Mohammerah.*

the Shaikh further requested that the words "own successive male descendants" might be substituted for the words "heirs and successors," and he also expressed the hope that His Majesty's Gov-

ernment would dispel the last shadow of doubt from his mind regarding their intentions in the future by adding after the words "male descendants" the words "up to a period of 100 years" (or, if it were possible, 150 years). The Political Resident promised to mention the point to His Majesty's Minister, whom he hoped shortly to meet.

According to a report by His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah in March 1908, the Turkish Corvette *Kileed-el-Bahar* from Basrah anchored off Falhiyah on the 7th idem and fired a salute of 21 guns which was returned. The Officer Commanding called on the Sardar Arfa, and, on the latter's expressing surprise at the visit, said that, if there were any objection, he would leave the port. The Sardar assured him that he had no objection, but that it had been unusual for the vessel to call. The Turkish Commander replied that he was taking a trip for change of air and had taken the opportunity to call and salute; he further asked for permission to send a boat to the bazar for provisions, to which the Sardar consented, provided the boat sent was unarmed. The vessel next morning anchored off the mouth of the Karun, and in the afternoon proceeded down the Shatt-el-Arab to the Turkish guard station at Sihan, and on the 9th passed up towards Basrah. Both the Karguzar and the Sardar Arfa called on the Consul with regard to the visit, and suggested that it might have been due to the fact that some 600 Arabs had come up the river from Gusba on the 6th to work on the new canals, to the presence of the French gunboat *Surprise*, or to a desire to establish a precedent.

The Shaikh of Mohammerah informed His Majesty's Consul in April last that he had heard that the Turkish Government were sending three gun-boats to the Shatt-el-Arab and that they were destined for use against Mohammerah. He therefore reminded Mr. McDouall of the assurances given him by the British Government against foreign attack. Mr. McDouall ascertained from His Majesty's Consul at Basrah that it was a fact that three vessels were being sent by the Turkish Government, but that, as far as he was aware, it was only with the object of patrolling the Shatt-el-Arab to prevent piracy and not with any design against Persian territory.

In March 1909 His Majesty's Consul reported that the Shaikh had, among other requests, represented that he was in immediate need of money, and reiterated his previous application for a loan for the purposes of an irrigation scheme, adding that, if the British Government were not prepared to grant one, they must not object to his getting it elsewhere. With reference to this request Major Cox suggested that, if the Shaikh's statement that full proprietary rights over Abadan Island, Mohammerah, and the land on the east bank of the Karun occupied or cultivated by them, were vested and confirmed in him and his tribe by the terms of the *firman* in his possession, was correct, Government should acquire a frontage on the island by lease or purchase in connection with the grant of a loan or the extended assurances for which the Shaikh had asked, or, failing this that an opportunity might be taken to obtain the ground required by the Oil Syndicate on easy terms in connection with the grant of the loan. In future the north and west shores of Abadan Island would be of much value, and the Syndicate was reviving its endeavours to acquire land there. The Government of India informed the Secretary of State that they were so impressed with the necessity of supporting the Shaikh that they were prepared to share in the loan for which he asked. Subsequently Major Cox telegraphed that the Shaikh would, for the present, be content with a provisional assurance that we were ready to grant a loan on suitable terms, and that he need not look elsewhere for it. Major Cox suggested that a lien on the works as they progressed would be a feasible form of security in the event of an irrigation or other utilitarian scheme being undertaken by the Shaikh with our assistance.

Before, however, the foregoing telegram had been communicated to His Majesty's Government Sir E. Grey had informed Sir G. Barclay that the British Government were under no obligation to the Shaikh to provide him with a loan, that no hope of a loan should be held out to him, and that he must be left to make his own terms with the Syndicate for land at Abadan and any other facilities required by them.



Major Cox telegraphed to Sir G. Barclay on the 5th April, with reference to the refusal of His Majesty's Government to accede to the Shaikh's request for a loan, that the Shaikh did not suggest or consider that the British Government were under an "obligation to grant him a loan," that he had been under pressure of great anxiety and had simply counted on the friendly desire of the British Government to promote his interests, and hoped for an assurance that they would do their best to find him the money for irrigation works when the need arose, either by means of a Government loan or the introduction of British financiers. Major Cox pressed that he might be permitted to inform the Shaikh that in the case of a small loan the Government of India would accommodate him on learning the amount and object in view, and that if a larger amount were required for utilitarian purposes the British Government would endeavour to obtain the money for him from British sources. The Government of India, in a telegram dated the 9th April to His Majesty's Secretary of State, strongly supported Major Cox's recommendation. They drew attention to the vital importance to Indian interests of maintaining British influence with the Shaikh, and emphasised the importance which the Shaikh's attitude might assume in certain eventualities, expressing general concurrence with the views expressed by Lord Curzon's Government, in their telegram dated the 26th November 1902 to the effect that our weakness in Persia arose largely from failure to support those Chiefs and officials who inclined to our side, and that, if there was a Chief entitled to such support, it was the Shaikh of Mohammerah, and if there was a part of Southern Persia where British interests specially demanded protection against foreign competition or intrigue, it was the mouth of the Karun.

In reply, the Secretary of State telegraphed on the 16th April to the effect that he had communicated the foregoing telegram to the Foreign Office, and had intimated that he adhered to his view that no charge should on this account be laid upon Indian revenues. He saw no objection to the suggestion that the Shaikh might be given general assurances that, if money were required by him for any purpose to which the British Government had no objection, they would do what they could to facilitate his obtaining it from British sources.

On the 29th April, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf telegraphed that it had been reported by His Majesty's Consul, Ahwaz, that the Shaikh was alleged to have contracted a loan of £10,000 from the Germans.

His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah reported, on the 12th May 1909, that the Shaikh admitted that £1,000 had recently been borrowed by Hajji Rais, the *factotum* of the Shaikh, from Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co., of Basrah, on a note of hand signed by Hajji Rais, on the surety of the Shaikh. The amount was taken to complete a sum of £7,000, paid for a date garden purchased by the Shaikh and is repayable after the date harvest. According to a rumour current in Ahwaz, but denied at Mohammerah, the Shaikh was also coquetting with Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co. in other ways. Sir G. Barclay had accordingly authorised the Political Resident, should he think it desirable, to insist on repayment of the borrowed £1,000 as a first charge on the contemplated loan from His Majesty's Government. Sir G. Barclay's action was approved by His Majesty's Government, who also directed that the Shaikh should be made to understand that the advance of £5,000 or £6,000 would not be regarded as including payment for the proposed Karun irrigation concession, the terms of which the Shaikh and the Concessionaires would settle between themselves later.

In connection with the above-mentioned loan of £1,000 taken by the Shaikh of Mohammerah from Messrs. Wonckhaus & Co., Hajji Rais reported that the Company had repeatedly intimated their readiness to lend money to the Shaikh. On receipt of the loan he now asked for, the Shaikh undertook immediately to liquidate this debt and in the future altogether to avoid such transactions. The Political Resident impressed upon the Shaikh that it was impossible to dissociate himself from the proceedings of Hajji Rais, his *factotum*, and explained to him in clear terms that, if he desired to retain the confidence of the British Government, he must endeavour to resist undesirable foreign influence both in his own interests and ours. The Shaikh said that in this matter he wished entirely to follow our advice. The Political Resident also discussed the subject with

(6) *German competition at Moham-  
merah.*



Hajji Rais. The latter requested that it might be remembered that he was first of all a trader, and, like other traders, his object was money-making, but he realised that he and the Shaikh were so closely connected in their general relations that it was inevitable that the latter should be associated with his own dealings, and he expressed his readiness to take such line of conduct as we might decide to be most conducive to our own interests and those of the Shaikh.

He assured the Political Resident, as regards the wharf which had lately been built and leased to Messrs. Wöneckhaus & Co., on behalf of the Shaikh (see page 47), that, if a British tenant could be produced, who would pay the same rental (£200) now paid by Messrs. Wöneckhaus & Co., in the event of the latter giving the lease up, he would undertake to prevent them from obtaining business in Mohammerah and force them to relinquish their lease by arranging an undetectable boycott by himself and other merchants over whom he had influence. He pointed out that his son would in this process be compelled to resign the German Shipping Line Agency and he hoped that the British Government would not let him lose by it. The Political Resident suggested that, as the Shaikh and commercial affairs in Mohammerah were practically controlled by Hajji Rais, if he attained the result indicated, it would be well worth while, as long as the position was maintained, to give him a subsidy. This matter could now be conveniently arranged indirectly through the Oil Company. The Political Resident also suggested that the Oil Company or Messrs. Shaw, Wallace might undertake confidentially to take on the tenancy of the wharf at the same rental as Messrs. Wöneckhaus & Co. in the event of the latter being forced to give up their lease, as it was important that Hajji Rais should begin pushing this matter before Messrs. Wöneckhaus & Co.'s position was assured.

The Political Resident stated that, although he did not doubt the Shaikh's personal *bonâ fides*, it was necessary in British interests for His Majesty's Representative to keep a tactful watch on Hajji Rais, as it was of the greatest importance to have the latter's good-will and co-operation.

Sir G. Barclay replied that, if the proposed arrangement with Hajji Rais were made, it would not only give him an undesirable hold over us, but would, if it came to light, give the Germans a very justifiable cause for complaint. Sir G. Barclay would prefer to rely on the influence of His Majesty's Consul to check any efforts which might be made by Hajji Rais to improve the position of the Germans.

Considerable friction arose in the spring of 1910 between the Turkish authorities on the Shatt-el-Arab and the Shaikh of Mohammerah, in consequence of the alleged refusal of the Shaikh to surrender, in accordance with his promise, the authors of certain outrages committed at Basrah, who had taken refuge at Mohammerah. By order of the Vali of Basrah a Turkish gunboat shelled and burned Zain, a village belonging to the Shaikh, which lies on the Turkish bank of the river, and threatened to bombard Falahiyeh where the Shaikh usually resides.

On receipt of this information, the Government of India telegraphed (7th May) to the Secretary of State that they desired to give strong support, in view of Indian interests at Mohammerah, to Colonel Cox's views that a restraining influence should be exercised on the Vali's activity. The Government of India further supported a proposal by Colonel Cox that the Turkish Government should be urged to substitute a less aggressive officer for the Vali, and that, in the event of non-compliance a gun-boat should be placed on the part of the river affected, with a view to ensuring that the important grain and date traffic, about to begin, should not be disturbed.

In reply, the Secretary of State telegraphed (12th May) that instructions to make earnest representations to the Turkish Government had been sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, but that, in view of reassuring accounts from His Majesty's Consul at Basrah, the Ambassador was postponing action.

As the Vali did not seem disposed to come to a settlement suitable and honourable to the Shaikh, the Government of India again telegraphed to the Secretary of State (17th May), saying that, unless there were reasons, such as German backing, which might make it inadvisable to do so, they trusted that His Majesty's Government might see their way to press for the recall of the Acting Vali; and that strong

British action seemed to be very necessary as aggressive action by the Turks at Basrah must reflect on British relations with the Chiefs at the head of the Gulf.

The Secretary of State replied (31st May) that, as the Consular officers at Bushire and Basrah took opposite views of the merits of the case, His Majesty's Government considered that it was more than ever desirable to avoid representations at Constantinople, and essential that the question should be settled locally. His Majesty's Consul at Basrah was instructed accordingly.

Lieutenant Wilson was deputed to proceed to Basrah for the purpose of discussing the difficulty with Mr. Crow and to endeavour to settle matters on some such lines as the following :—

The Shaikh to promise to give up Turkish criminals and not foment disturbances on Turkish territory, and the Vali to express regret or his condolences for the personal injury sustained by the Shaikh, and to assure the Shaikh that, if he kept his promises, his tribes and his property in Ottoman territory would not be molested.

The Shaikh sent a reply to the Vali's accusations against him, which the Vali accepted. The Vali, however, politely, though firmly, declined to add any expression of regret or condolence, and stated that he had already given the Shaikh assurances in regard to his interests on the Turkish side.

The Shaikh recognised that his only course was to accept with apparent good grace the solution arrived at, although he had received no personal amends or any guarantee against a speedy repetition of similar tactics, on the part of the Vali. The Shaikh expressed the conviction that an early recurrence of trouble was certain at Mohammerah and Kuwait, unless His Majesty's Government made it clear at Constantinople and Basrah that they would not see him weakened or unfairly treated. Colonel Cox strongly supported the recommendation of Lieutenant Wilson that the best solace for the Shaikh would be the speedy intimation to him of the assurances which His Majesty's Government contemplated giving him, especially the decoration, and Mr. Marling ventured to hope that, in view of the Shaikh's demeanour throughout the affair and his readiness to follow British advice, this satisfaction might be given him.

His Majesty's Government were waiting at the close of the period under review until they had all the facts of the case before them before coming to a decision.

This Arab principality remained under the rulership of Shaikh Mubarak, who attained his position in 1896 by the assassination of his two elder brothers.

#### Kuwait.

Signs of both Russian and Turkish interference with Kuwait, and its importance as the probable terminus of the Anatolian Railway, led the British Government in 1899 to conclude an agreement with the Shaikh on behalf of himself and his heirs and successors, whereby no foreign representative was to be received at Kuwait, and no portion of Kuwait territory was to be alienated to foreigners or to a foreign Power, without the consent of the British Government; and in return Shaikh Mubarak was assured that the good offices of the British Government would be extended to the ruler of Kuwait so long as the new agreement was respected by him.

In May 1906, Vice-Admiral Sir Edmund Poë addressed the Government

(1) *Acquisition of foreshore at Bunder-esh-Shweikh.*

of India pointing out that the anchorage at Kurein, which Captain Fleming had described as being, in his opinion, the real harbour of Kuwait, was a very narrow strip of deep water, and difficult of access for large vessels. He considered it very improbable that the Kurein anchorage would be selected as a terminal post for the Baghdad Railway, in preference to Duhat Kathama, as the latter possesses a large area of deep water within a mile's distance from the shore and is very easy to approach at all times.

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, however, dissented from this view. They expressed the opinion that a convenient terminal port could probably be made at Kurein at a very much less cost than at Kathama. They did not, however, advocate the construction of a harbour at either place.

On 14th September, Major Cox telegraphed stating that, in view of the opinion of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, he presumed that, with reference to the original proposal for obtaining possession of a portion of the Kurein foreshore, it would be advisable for us to acquire as much of the limited access to the front of the Agency as Shaikh Mubarak might be prepared to grant on reasonable terms. The Government of India replied authorising him to consult the Shaikh with regard to the acquisition of so much of the foreshore as he might be likely to grant on reasonable terms. Major Cox was reminded, however, that his enquiries were to be merely tentative.

On 9th October 1906, Major Cox telegraphed that the Shaikh had stated in an interview with Major Knox, that the Germans, armed with documents from the Sultan, had vainly endeavoured to acquire from him first Um Kasr, then Kathama, and finally Bunder Shweikh. On the 19th of February 1907, a report was received from the Political Resident showing the result of negotiations with Shaikh Mubarak. It appeared that the Shaikh was willing to cede a strip of foreshore measuring 600 yards in length by 100 in depth wherever Government liked to select it. The Political Agent explained that the Shaikh was willing to sell the land outright, but would prefer to receive a yearly quit-rent. He suggested that the first offer to the Shaikh should be Rs. 50,000 as sale price or Rs. 2,400 as quit-rent in the alternative; but he anticipated a very much greater demand being made, as the Shaikh was well aware of the potential value of the land. Major Cox recommended that the Government of India should authorise the Political Agent to make an offer of a yearly grant taking Rs. 15,000 as an outside limit. He further suggested that a portion of the grant should take the form of a subsidy.

On the 26th June 1907, the Secretary of State for India enquired how the negotiation for the purchase stood. He also asked whether, in view of the possible utilisation of the site as a terminus for the Baghdad Railway, it would be more convenient for the purchase, if decided on, to be made by the Government of India, through the Political Agent, for eventual transfer to the Railway Company, or by some existing company, such as the British India, and if so, how the latter mode of proceeding would be viewed by the Shaikh. The Government of India stated in reply, that, as their negotiations with the Shaikh had been for direct sale or lease, they saw no reason why they should not conduct the transaction direct. They mentioned that, if their previous proposal for the acquisition of a launch for the Political Agent were sanctioned, it would probably facilitate the conduct of the negotiations.

On the 23rd July 1907, the Secretary of State telegraphed that Major Knox should be instructed to continue negotiations for the purchase, though the amount of land to be acquired was not necessarily to be limited to dimensions mentioned above. As the value of the land was likely of rise, and immediate purchase of the amount necessary for ultimate requirements was therefore expedient, the amount to be acquired should depend on the extent of foreshore suitable for the construction of harbour works. It seemed doubtful whether a depth of 100 yards would prove sufficient. The lease was to be perpetual if the land was not sold outright but rented, and it was desirable that the contract should secure a right of pre-emption on favourable terms of any further land that might be required hereafter either at El Kathama or Bunder-esh-Shweikh. His Majesty's Government asked for further information as to the total extent of foreshore in Kuwait territory suitable for the construction of harbour works.

The proposal to purchase a launch for the Political Agent was being further considered, and in the meantime His Majesty's Government considered that the negotiations with the Shaikh need not necessarily be governed by the maximum price recommended by Major Cox, though every effort was to be made to avoid unnecessary expenditure in acquiring the land.

On the 14th August 1907, Major Knox reported that Shaikh Mubarak was willing to grant, for a perpetual rent of Rs. 60,000 a year, a rectangular plot measuring 3,750 yards along the sea face by 300 yards in depth at Bunde Shweikh. The Shaikh reserved a plot, 150 yards square, in the centre of the reservation, where he had built a small coal-shed. The rent was to give the

British Government a right, without further demand, to all the foreshore facing the grant except the portion opposite to the Shaikh's *enclave*. The foreshore would be regarded as extending to a depth of three fathoms at lowest spring tides, and full liberty would be granted to build or sublet to British or Kuwait subjects, and also to construct all works necessary to open a passage for steamers from the open sea. Kuwaitis were to have a prior right of pre-emption to the area within 1,000 yards of the reservation, but the British Government were to have precedence of all other persons. They were also to secure pre-emption or priority of lease to the island of Kurein and priority of lease to Ras Kathama, and the foreshore there to a limit of 2 nautical miles in any direction, but the Shaikh reserved an *enclave* 300 cubits square within such reservation. A declaration, dictated by the Shaikh, that he would not part with rights in land to Turkey or any other Power without the consent of the British Government, was also included in the draft concession. The Shaikh subsequently wished to interpolate words restricting the operation of the agreement to such period as that for which he and his children might experience kindness from the British, but this condition Major Knox hoped to get removed. The present opportunity was considered to be very favourable for negotiations in Major Knox's opinion, as the Shaikh was angry with the Turks. Major Knox recommended that the offer, which would only be open for two months, should at once be accepted, as the Shaikh's mood might change. On the 28th August 1907, the Government of India telegraphed the information to the Secretary of State concurring with Major Knox and asking to be authorised to make the best terms they could with the Shaikh in the general sense of his draft concession. They stated that they would try to fix a price and rent for Shweikh Island and Kathama in case it was desired to secure these hereafter. They also pointed out that the concession, while securing the port of Kuwait, did not, however, close Khor Abdulla to foreign enterprise, and stated that the possibility of developing a harbour or even a ship canal to Basrah by this route could not be overlooked. Since Shaikh Mubarak appeared to be in a reasonable mood, the Government of India, suggested that it might even be possible to secure from him now a right of future pre-emption at a fixed price over Warba Island and the anchorages north and south of the island with the adjacent foreshores within a distance of 3 nautical miles of the island so far as they might lie within his territory. These would give the British Government a command of all possible railway outlets on the western shore of the Gulf. They considered the possibility of the line being taken across the Shatt-el-Arab to Khor Musa to be remote.

Subsequently the Political Agent received from the Shaikh a written approval of the draft agreement embodying the terms already stated, with the omission of the objectionable interpolation. The Shaikh required in return a formal acceptance of the terms of the lease, a guarantee from Government of his internal independence and a promise that no Custom duties would be taken on anything in the land to be rented and that the control over Kuwait Customs would be left to him. In return for the latter, he guaranteed to fix the Custom duties against British ships on the basis of his present schedule, such schedule not to be altered without the consent of Government. The Political Agent regretted the introduction of the stipulations regarding the Customs, and he proposed to ask the Shaikh to treat this matter separately, but he was convinced that a refusal would rouse the Shaikh's suspicions and imperil the progress of the negotiations. The Political Agent also urged the inclusion in the formal acceptance of an assurance of the desire of Government to see the Shaikh and his heirs strong and independent. In repeating this telegram to the Secretary of State, the Government of India observed that the proposed guarantee of internal independence presumably meant that the British Government would guarantee not to interfere with the Shaikh's internal autonomy, such guarantee not affecting the rights, if any, of Turkey. On this understanding they saw no objection to it. The latest information in their possession as regards the Customs was that the Shaikh levied an import duty of 5 per cent. *ad valorem* on all commodities. The Government of India considered that the suggestion by Major Knox for the inclusion of the declaration that the British Government wished to see the Shaikh strong and independent was unnecessary unless the Shaikh himself pressed for it.

Major Cox's opinion was then invited on the proposals made by the Government of India to the Secretary of State, and on the 3rd September 1907, he telegraphed suggesting the advisability of asking the Shaikh to add to the agreement a clause to the effect that, in the settlement of future disputes between his Customs Department and British or foreign subjects, he would be guided to a reasonable extent by the friendly advice of the British Government or of their representative at Kuwait. Major Cox observed that, with reference to the proposed guarantee of internal autonomy, the question of the right of the British representative to liberate fugitive slaves, with or without the Shaikh's concurrence, might become difficult sooner or later. For this reason, he invited the Government of India to consider while giving the guarantee, the following alternative course :—

*First.*—Either to omit all reference to the slave trade from the document, and then a short time afterwards, ask the Shaikh to conclude a slave trade agreement ; or

*Second.*—When giving the guarantee, to add a phrase expressing a confident hope that the Shaikh would conclude such a Convention should it become necessary. Major Cox considered that it would be best to trust to the Shaikh's increasing amenableness and adopt the first alternative.

The Resident remarked that if Major Knox considered that the grant of a right of pre-emption over Warba Island, &c., as well as over Kathama, was still possible, it should be included in the present agreement, but that, in order not to delay signature, the determination of the provisional prices might be delayed if necessary for a month. Subject to the above observations, Major Cox concurred in the proposals of the Government of India.

The Government of India, in repeating the foregoing to the Secretary of State, recommended the following :—

*First.*—That the Shaikh might be expected to be guided to a reasonable extent by the friendly advice of Government in Customs matter without any formal agreement.

*Second.*—As regard slaves, they considered it inadvisable to complicate the question of leave by raising this ; but if it appeared at any future time that the matter could be pressed upon the Shaikh's attention, without incurring his resentment, they would be ready to do so.

The Government of India, concurred in Major Cox's recommendations regarding Warba Island.

On the 24th September 1907, the Government of India telegraphed to the Secretary of State that after further consideration, they considered the Shaikh's proposals regarding Customs unobjectionable, provided that he would agree to treat British subjects always on the same footing, *qua* Customs rates, as Kuwaitis. It seemed necessary to stipulate this in order to prevent possible collusion between foreigners and Kuwaitis in the event of the rates being lowered hereafter in favour of the latter.

On the 2nd October 1907, the Secretary of State telegraphed authorising the conclusion of the Agreement with the Shaikh of Kuwait for the lease of the rectangular plot at Bunder Shweikh at a yearly rental of Rs. 60,000. In view of the importance of the condition as to the payment of the rent as long as the British Government desired the land, His Majesty's Government desired the addition, if possible, of words to the effect that they reserved the option to determine the lease at any time and that the money would cease to be paid in the event of such option being exercised by them.

The proposal to acquire sites other than at Bunder Shweikh was to be held over pending its full examination by His Majesty's Government, as questions of territorial jurisdiction, for example in the case of Warba Island, appeared to be involved.

With reference to the passage in the draft acceptance to the effect that the British Government wished to see the Shaikh strong and independent, His Majesty's Government directed that the sentence should be abbreviated so as to read "the desire of the Government is that the friendship and agreement between the Government and the Shaikh of Kuwait may be perpetual." The views of the Government of India, as to customs, slaves, and independence were

approved and His Majesty's Government added that absolute secrecy should be maintained as to the agreement and that the Shaikh should pledge himself as to this. The Political Agent was to be instructed to take no steps for the present to mark out the ground.

In communicating these instructions to the local officers, the Government of India directed that at the end of the clause declaring that Government had a right "to put down buoys and do all works needful for the ease of the ships from the open sea to the Bunder Shweikh," words should be inserted, such as "*inter alia* the construction of light-houses and beacons in Kuwait territory, as may at any time be found to be necessary." The agreement embodying the foregoing amendments was concluded on the 15th October 1907, but, owing to a misunderstanding on the part of the Political Agent, it included an additional clause giving a right of pre-emption to the entire island of Warba situated near Khor Abdullah, and its surrounding foreshore.

In March 1908, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India telegraphed his approval of the terms of the lease of the Bunder Shweikh foreshore, and expressed the satisfaction of His Majesty's Government at the successful conclusion of the negotiations.

In November 1907, the Government of India informed His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, in connection with the acquisition of the foreshore at Bunder Shweikh, Kuwait, that, owing to a misunderstanding on the part of the Political Agent, Kuwait, the agreement included an additional clause giving a right of pre-emption to the entire island of Warba, situated near Khor Abdullah, and its surrounding foreshore. They, however, subsequently reported that in their opinion, the inclusion in the lease of the right of pre-emption to Warba island, which merely conveyed to them the Shaikh's rights for what they were worth, could in no circumstances embarrass them even if the Shaikh's title to the island were doubtful. The Secretary of State asked that the Political Agent might be instructed to ascertain the nature of the Shaikh's claims to Warba island from the Shaikh in such a manner that it would not lead him to think that the British Government were prepared to support those claims. He added that, until the claims had been investigated, His Majesty's Government would not be in a position to consider whether further action should be taken in respect of the island.

In September the Government of India informed the Secretary of State that the evidence which the Political Agent at Kuwait had collected showed that, until the recent establishment on Bubiyan island of a post by the Turkish authorities, the island had been in the exclusive occupation of the Awazim tribe, who had exercised for generations hereditary fishing rights in virtue of grants made by the Shaikhs of Kuwait, and that the authority of the Shaikhs to make such grants had hitherto never been disputed. They considered that these facts confirmed the view as to the Shaikh's claim to the island of Bubiyan which they had already put forward in 1904. As regards the coast line from Um Kasr to Sabiya, they considered that, in the absence of any reliable evidence that the Ahmad-bin-Rizk who was alleged by Shaikh Mubarak to have built the old fort and dug the Um Kasr wells, was a Kuwait subject, the Shaikh's claims rested on the existence of old settlements founded by Kuwait subjects on the western bank of the Khor Sabiya and on the fact that the coast line was actually in the occupation of Kuwait Arabs who recognised the authority of the Shaikh alone. They doubted whether the Shaikh's title could be considered as fully established by these considerations.

The evidence as regards Warba island was, in their opinion, by no means conclusive. The Shaikh claimed the island, which had apparently never been occupied, merely on geographical consideration, as the private proprietor, under a deed of settlement, of the opposite coast line from Fao to Khor Zubeir. So far, therefore, as Warba island and the Um Kasr-Sabiya coast were concerned, they thought His Majesty's Government would probably prefer to await the result of the further enquiries which Major Cox had directed before taking active steps to assert the Shaikh's claims. As regards Bubiyan island, the Government of India stated that they would be glad to be informed whether His Majesty's Government contemplated addressing the Turkish Government in the matter, or



whether they desired that a favourable opportunity should be taken to assist the Shaikh to establish his authority. The Government of India added that at present it would appear that the Shaikh was not anxious to move in the matter, and that, although they attached the greatest importance to the assertion of the Shaikh's rights in Bubiyan, they would not advise the location of a Kuwait post on the island unless the hearty co-operation of the Shaikh could be counted on.

In October, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India intimated that Sir E. Grey considered that it would be inadvisable, in present circumstances, to raise the question of the rights of the Shaikh of Kuwait to the islands of Bubiyan and Warba, but that there was no objection to the continuance of the further enquiries that were being made under the directions of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf as to the Shaikh's rights in those localities. Major Cox was informed accordingly and he was asked to report the result of the enquiries when completed.

On the 6th May, the Government of India informed the Secretary of State for India that the further enquiries instituted by the Political Agent, Kuwait, in the matter had not resulted in the production of any fresh evidence as to the ownership of Warba island, and that they did not consider it desirable to take any steps towards the assertion of the Shaikh's claims so far as this island was concerned. His Majesty's Government concurred in this view.

A report was received from Major Cox on the 29th October 1906 to the effect that certain packages consigned to Shaikh Mubarak from Bombay by one of the British India steamers, having been over-carried to Basrah, had been impounded by the Customs authorities at that port, who demanded payment of full duty on the ground that Kuwait was Ottoman territory and had no Customs House. Mr. Consul Crow was said to have informed Major Cox that the Central Turkish Customs had issued strict orders for the treatment of Kuwait and Bahrain as ports of the Turkish Empire for Customs purposes, and that His Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople thought it undesirable to raise any question as to the status of Kuwait for the sake of the duty on two bales of goods, and that he had accordingly advised the British Indian Agents to endeavour to re-ship the goods to Bombay. Major Cox apprehended that the incident would inevitably impress Shaikh Mubarak with the timidity of British support and might tend to prejudice his relations with British representatives in the Gulf.

At an interview which Major Cox had with Shaikh Mubarak in March 1906, he took the opportunity of showing the Shaikh a specimen of flag of the pattern which had previously been selected by the latter with the addition of the word "Kuwait" in Roman letters as well as in Arabic, and of reading over to him the printed certificate of nationality to be used by vessels belonging to the Shaikh or his subjects. The Shaikh approved of the "certificate" with the exception of item 5, "Name of Master," which he explained would be useless, as the Nakhodas were always being changed. The Shaikh also took exception to the Roman characters on the flag, as they were likely to cause offence to the Ottoman Government. With the approval of His Majesty's Secretary of State, the Political Resident was instructed to advise the Shaikh to adopt the flag without the Roman lettering and to supply to him forms of the shipping certificate, with the item objected to omitted.

Shaikh Mubarak agreed to issue the articles, but demurred to the use of the flag lest he should provoke retaliatory measures at the hands of the Turkish authorities at Basrah. The matter was reported by the local officers who pointed out that the Shaikh was not disposed to adopt the distinctive flag unless he were fortified by an assurance that he would not be permitted to suffer from following the advice given him. The Government of India accordingly addressed the Secretary of State for India on the subject. They considered that the grant of such assurance might involve the British Government in responsibilities of a somewhat extended character, since the opportunities which the Turks enjoyed of inflicting injury on the Shaikh and his subjects were not confined to Kuwait territory in respect of which the British Government were already pledged to defend



him. They suggested, however, that, if the Embassy at Constantinople believed that some means could be found of protecting the Kuwaitis against injury at the hands of the Turkish officials at Basrah and other Turkish ports, the recognition of this obligation might unobjectionably be conveyed to Shaikh Mubarak. But should His Majesty's Government not be prepared to give such a guarantee, they proposed to drop the matter.

The view of Sir N. O'Connor, His Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, was that the Shaikh should at first fly the new flag in his konak or other Government building, Kuwait, where we should have no difficulty in affording him protection if the Turkish Government attempted to interfere with his action. The Imperial Government would thus become accustomed to the change, and the way would be prepared by degrees for the adoption of the flag on the high seas. Sir N. O'Connor also made a few remarks on the broader aspects of the Kuwait question. He said that His Majesty's Government had—after mature consideration—entered into a special agreement with the Shaikh of Kuwait, which, on the one hand, imposed certain restrictions upon him, while, on the other hand, it implied more or less a guarantee of protection and the integrity of his territory. This agreement was of decided importance as regards our future negotiations respecting the *débouché* of the Baghdad Railway. It had not been formally or officially acknowledged by the Ottoman Government, yet it had weight with them, and would influence their course of action under certain circumstances. It was, moreover, a difficulty in the way of the Germans, which he thought had already accounted in some degree for their desire to an understanding with us in regard to the Baghdad Railway. Sir N. O'Connor remarked that any exhibition of weakness on the part of His Majesty's Government or of a desire to shirk the consequences of our agreement with Kuwait would materially affect our position.

In February 1909, the Shaikh of Kuwait complained to Major Knox, the Political Agent at that place, of the wanton destruction of his property at Fao by Turkish soldiers. It appeared that the latter had breached certain embankments which protected the Shaikh's property with the result that the water flooded and destroyed a number of his date trees. The reason given by the Turkish authorities were that, for the safety of the fort, a clear space of 600 metres was required, that the Shaikh had enclosed newly reclaimed land without paying the usual taxes, and that he had not obtained the necessary permission from Government. The Shaikh, on the other hand, contended that the limits of the fort had been laid down long ago in writing, which he possessed, that he had no knowledge why the limits had been enlarged, and that he had been given no opportunity of representing his views as proprietor. He further declared that he and the fort military authorities had built the bunds together eleven years ago, and that they had merely been repaired.

When visiting the Shaikh about the beginning of April, the Political Resident found him much aggrieved at the action of the Turkish in the matter. The Shaikh begged that pressure might be put upon the Turkish Government to agree to the formation of a committee, consisting of His Majesty's Consul at Basrah or the Political Agent at Kuwait on behalf of the British Government, a representative of the Vali, and a representative of the Shaikh of Kuwait, which should meet at Fao and examine the position locally by the light of the Shaikh's documents.

The Government of India, in reporting the matter to His Majesty's Government, pointed out that, in February 1899, the Secretary of State, in approving the ratification of an agreement with the Shaikh of Kuwait, had authorised a hope being held out to the Shaikh that Government would do what they could to protect him in the matter of his Fao estate. In view of this assurance the Government of India supported Major Cox's recommendation that the Shaikh's proposal should be adopted. His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, however, called for further information regarding the Shaikh's complaint of Turkish encroachments on his properties at Fao and pointed out that, if representations at Constantinople were to be more than a recommendation to the Porte, to instruct the local authorities to bring about an equitable settlement by means of a Committee or, otherwise, a detailed statement of the whole case would be necessary. From

the detailed report which was furnished by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, in August, on the subject, it appeared that there were two separate claims under dispute, one with the Turkish military authorities regarding that portion of the Shaikh's property contiguous to the periscope of the Fao fort and involving the right of riparian reclamation, and the other concerning the ownership of a piece of valuable ground at the northern extremity of the Shaikh's estate.

Major Cox was of opinion that it was beyond dispute that the Shaikh was extremely sore in regard to the treatment he had received in connection with his Fao properties, and that the matter touched the Shaikh much more closely than any of the current questions of ownership affecting other localities in his reputed territory, such as Bubiyan, Um Kasr or Warba. He added that it was clear that the failure of the British Government to give him the active assistance which he had looked for in the present difficulty was prejudicing his attitude towards them in other important connections, such as, the quarantine and house-rent questions. What the Shaikh had consistently pressed for was a committee of enquiry by the finding of which he agreed to abide. Major Cox, therefore, expressed the hope that it might still be considered expedient as well as feasible, in the interests of the British Government's general relations with the Shaikh, to endeavour to get the Porte to agree to the appointment of a committee, composed of persons agreeable to both parties, to investigate the Shaikh's claims exhaustively. He considered that the presence of Major Knox or of His Majesty's Consul at Basrah, if not as a member of the committee, might be pressed for to watch the proceedings for the information of His Majesty's Government.

The Government of India, in forwarding the correspondence to His Majesty's Secretary of State, stated that, although it was possible that the Shaikh would not succeed in convincing the Turkish authorities they agreed with Major Cox that it was most desirable, on political grounds, that a recommendation should be made to the Porte to appoint a committee consisting of persons agreeable to both parties for the final settlement of the matters in dispute. They added that it would also be an advantage if, as proposed by Major Cox, a British officer were permitted to be present, and suggested that, if His Majesty's Government were able to make such a recommendation, the British Consul at Basrah be nominated for the purpose.

In February 1909, Major Knox, the Political Agent at Kuwait, reported that the Shaikh, when he visited His Majesty's Consul at Basrah at the Kuwait Agency on the 31st of the previous month, had informed him that the embankment had been rebuilt. He further stated that the Fort Commandant had stood by during the construction and had encouraged the workmen, directing them to build the embankment wall. And in the spring of 1910 the Shaikh informed the Political Agent that he believed matters were now finally and satisfactorily settled. Orders had been given by the Turkish authorities, that he could in future carry out repairs, and was not to be interfered with.

In January 1909 the Shaikh of Kuwait applied to the Political Agent for a loan of two lakhs of rupees, without interest, to be repaid in two yearly instalments. The Shaikh had been making large purchases of land, and explained that his need for ready money was due to large advances made by him to pearl merchants, whom he could not press for immediate repayment, and to the fact that his brother, Shaikh Khazal of Mohammerah, had asked for the postponement of the payment of this year's instalment of a large loan due to him (the Shaikh of Kuwait).

The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf strongly supported the application. The Government of India, in applying, on the 2nd February, for the sanction of the Secretary of State to the grant of the loan, expressed the opinion that, for political reasons, and in order to prevent the possibility of the Shaikh applying elsewhere for pecuniary help, it was desirable to make the required advance, free of interest, on condition that it was repaid in two yearly instalments and that the Shaikh should not borrow from other sources until repayment was made.

On the 24th May, the Secretary of State sanctioned the grant of the loan on the terms proposed above and Major Cox was informed accordingly.

The Shaikh expressed his gratitude for the grant of the loan, and accepted the conditions ; and in due course repaid the first instalment to the Government of India.

In July 1908, a quarrel took place at Kuwait between Kuwait and Persian

(7) *Dispute between Persian and Kuwait subjects on board a British India Company's vessel at Kuwait.*

subjects on board a British India Company's vessel. In the absence of Shaikh Mubarak, the Political Agent represented the matter to Shaikh Jabir, who punished and warned his men who were the aggressors. Shaikh Mubarak, on his return, took umbrage at the Political Agent's intervention in the dispute and intimated to the British India Company that their vessels were not required at Kuwait. He also ordered the native agent of the Company to leave Kuwait within eight days. The Political Agent suggested that the Bombay-Persian Company, whom the Shaikh had invited to send vessels to Kuwait, should be requested not to do so until the principle was established that the proper channel of communication between the Shaikh and British subjects and firms was through the Political Agent. Major Cox pointed out that the British India Company had been in the habit of settling their disputes direct with the Shaikh, and that they might prefer to continue this policy. He, however, suggested that the Government of India should ask the views of the British India Company through their Bombay Agent, and enquire from the latter whether he could square or otherwise dissuade the Bombay-Persian Company from sending vessels to Kuwait.

The Government of India replied that it would, in their opinion, be better for the present to leave the British India Company to settle matters direct with the Shaikh without the intervention of the Political Agent. They preferred not to make any suggestion to the British India Company as to their attitude towards the Bombay-Persian Company, and enquired whether the Resident could ascertain the wishes and intentions of the British India Company through their Bushire Agent.

[ ] In September, Major Cox reported that the chief Agent of the British India Company had an interview with the Shaikh at Mohammerah, and the incident was finally closed the following month when it was reported that the Shaikh of Kuwait had removed his prohibition against passengers travelling by, and goods being shipped by, the British India Company's vessels.

In a telegram, dated the 17th August 1905, the Secretary of State for India

(8) *Withdrawal of Turkish Troops from Bubiyan Island.*

announced that His Majesty's Government were not prepared to take any immediate action in the matter of Bubiyan Island, and desired to leave to Sir N. O'Connor's discretion the question of approaching the Porte. The Defence Committee would take the matter into consideration along with the question of the eventual Baghdad Railway terminus.

The Government of India, however, in a despatch dated the 2nd August 1906, again urged on His Majesty's Government the necessity for demanding the removal of the Turkish military position Bubiyan Island. In doing so they laid stress on the conclusions arrived at by Vice-Admiral Sir E. S. Poles that, next to the anchorage of Ras Kathama, Khor Abdullah offered the most suitable conditions for the future terminal port of the Baghdad Railway. They also pointed out that the indefinite postponement of action on our part, in face of the continued occupation of the island by Turkish troops, had to some extent shaken the faith of Shaikh Mubarak and rendered him cautious of identifying himself too markedly with us ; and that the withdrawal of the Turkish Troops would go a long way towards reviving his trust in our policy and making him more amenable to our advice.

On the 5th September 1907, the Government of India addressed a despatch

(9) *Operations conducted by the Shaikh of Mohammerah and the Shaikh of Kuwait against the Beni Truf tribe.*

to the Secretary of State on the subject of the conduct of the Shaikh of Kuwait in taking part in an expedition organised by the Shaikh of Mohammerah against his rebellious tribesmen. It appeared that Shaikh Khazal of Mohammerah found himself obliged to take strong measures in his capacity of Persian Governor of the Mohammerah district in order to compel the tribesmen of the

Beni Truf to pay their revenue. Shaikh Mubarak, about the middle of June, proceeded to Mohammerah in his steam-yacht for the purposes of supporting his friend. He took with him a large quantity of small arms and ammunition, water-skins and other articles which he handed over to Shaikh Khazal, and he subsequently sent his vessel back for a second consignment. He also arranged at Shaikh Khazal's request, to garrison the Mohammerah outpost of Kasbeh temporarily with some of his own men so as to free the Arab garrison for service with the field force. The operations resulted in the surrender of the Beni Truf. Although the operations in which Shaikh Khazal was engaged were described merely as the reduction to order of a rebellious tribe, the Beni Truf, the Government of India had reason to believe that the Shaikh had contemplated the reduction of this tribe for some time, with the object of extending his unquestioned territorial authority to Hawizeh on the Turkish frontier. It seemed, therefore, that the proceedings had more than a temporary and local signification and might form part of a scheme for consolidating the Arab power in these regions under a central head.

The Government of India observed that by conveying arms and ammunition up to the Shatt-el-Arab in his private yacht without the authority or permission of the Persian Government, Shaikh Mubarak had run the risk of involving himself in serious difficulties with that Government or with the Turkish authorities, in either of which cases diplomatic complications affecting His Majesty's Government might have arisen. The Persian Government might reasonably have imagined that the prompt assistance rendered by Shaikh Mubarak to Shaikh Khazal would encourage the latter to assert his independence, should he find a convenient opportunity for doing so, while the Porte might have regarded the incident as an indication of Mubarak's growing disregard of Turkish suzerainty. The Government of India understood that the Minister at Tehran had received intimation that the Russians suspected the British authorities of having organised an alliance between the Shaikhs of Mohammerah and Kuwait with a view to the independence of the former, and they had also received a report from Mohammerah to the effect that the Persian Government was suspicious of the friendship between the two Shaikhs. The possibility of a coalition between these Shaikhs had not escaped the attention of the Government of India and in connection with this incident they invited a reference to the apprehensions which they had previously expressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, as to the possible formation of a confederacy of Arab Shaikhs led by Shaikh Mubarak and the Shaikh of Mohammerah in order to secure their independence of foreign dominion. The attitude assumed by Shaikh Mubarak appeared to favour the supposition that he was at all events desirous of drawing closer the bonds between himself and Shaikh Khazal, even to the extent of furnishing armed assistance to the latter in Persian territory. In connection with this incident the Government of India reviewed briefly the history of the political relations between the Shaikh of Kuwait and the British Government, and concluded that it might be held to be the settled policy of the British Government that the external relations of Kuwait should be in their hands. They suggested that as the British position in Kuwait *vis-à-vis* other Powers would be greatly strengthened if this principle of policy could be embodied in a formal agreement, advantage might perhaps be taken of Shaikh Khazal's warlike expedition in Mohammerah and of the negotiation in progress for the purchase of the Kuwait foreshore, to add a clause to this effect to the foreshore Agreement about to be executed.

If His Majesty's Government were unable to approve this proposal, it was suggested that the Shaikh should be informed that the Government of India had taken strong exception to his recent expedition in Arabistan and that, unless he sought and was guided by their advice in such matters, they would not be able to exercise their good offices on his behalf.

On the 8th October, the Secretary of State telegraphed that no action was to be taken at present in the direction of either of the two proposals made by the Government of India with regard to the behaviour of the Shaikh of Kuwait in taking part in the expedition organised by the Shaikh of Mohammerah against his rebellious tribesmen. He stated that it would be a matter for consideration on the conclusion of the foreshore negotiations, whether the warnings given to the Shaikh in 1901 and 1904 should not be repeated.

In May 1907, Colonel Cox, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, addressed the Government of India regarding the desirability of closing the coal depôt at Bushire and establishing one at Kuwait. He brought to notice that the actual coaling work at Bushire, which was done under a contract arrangement with a local trader, was carried on under circumstances of great difficulty, and that the harbour itself had many disadvantages. He represented that at Kuwait the harbour was much more sheltered and convenient for large vessels, and that the more frequent appearance there of British ships, which would result, would have a useful effect in other ways. He agreed, when consulted by the Government of India, that the Bunder Shweikh foreshore at Kuwait was suited for the location of the coaling station. Sir George Warrender, the then Naval Commander-in-Chief, was of the same opinion and had no objection to the proposed transfer.

The results of a survey of the Bunder Shweikh foreshore, carried out by the Commander of H. M. S. *Lapwing* in consultation with the Political Agent at Kuwait, were reported by Colonel Cox in August 1909, and sites were suggested for the location of (1) the rectangular plot of ground at Bunder Shweikh leased by the Shaikh of Kuwait to the British Government in 1907, and (2) the proposed coal depôt at Kuwait within the rectangular concession. Admiral Slade, the present Naval Commander-in-Chief, considered that the location of the concession should be such that the Shaikh's coal-shed, which was within it, would be exactly in the middle of the frontage. The Government of India, in addressing the Secretary of State on the subject, agreed with the opinion of the Naval Commander-in-Chief, and recommended the proposed transfer of the coaling station at Bushire to Kuwait, the depôt to be located on the site suggested by the local officers. The matter is still under consideration.

Early in 1910, Bin Saud, Wahabi of Riadh in Southern Nejd, at the head of a large following, camped in the neighbourhood of Kuwait. He exchanged visits with the Political Agent there and made himself most agreeable. He was to start on an expedition at the head of his own force and the Kuwait contingent, which Shaikh Mubarak had been collecting for some time. The real objective of the force seemed to be the Shammar and Bin Rashid of Hail, although Shaikh Mubarak explained that the expedition was against the Dhafir Shaikhs. This report was telegraphed to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India on the 19th March, and at the same time the Government of India instructed Major Trevor by telegram to convey a warning to the Shaikh not to join the expedition, the communication to be made in terms of previous warnings against similar action calculated to involve him in difficulties with Nejd or the Turks. The combined forces of Bin Saud and Shaikh Mubarak, under the command of the former, marched out against the Dhafir and the Muntafik before Major Trevor was able to communicate the warning to the Shaikh. The Dhafir and the Muntafik, with a contingent of Bedouins from the allied tribes turned out to meet the attack, and a fight took place in the country between Ar Rakhaimiya, Waguba and Zarahbiat. The engagement ended in the defeat of the Nejd and Kuwait forces. It was reported that a second expedition was being got up on a much larger scale to avenge the defeat.

Meanwhile opportunity was found by Captain Shakespear to communicate the warning to the Shaikh as directed by the Government of India. Shaikh Mubarak explained that he intended nothing which could possibly involve him in conflict with the Turks or with others, that he always bore in mind the warning given to him in 1900 by Colonel Kemball, then Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to avoid any such activity as would give the Turks a pretext for interference, but that in the present case he was practically forced to assert his authority to secure his people from molestation. However, no further developments took place as regards the second expedition during the period under review.

On the 7th June 1910 the Resident in the Gulf reported that the Vali of Basrah persisted in a demand made by him that Shaikh Mubarak's four elder sons should take out papers of Turkish nationality as a condition of the registration

(10) *Proposed transfer of the coal depôt at Bushire to Kuwait.*

(11) *Joint expedition by Nejd and Kuwait forces against the Dhafir and the Muntafik.*

(12) *Registration of the Shaikh of Kuwait's property at Fadhgia in the Basrah Vilayat.*

of their property. The Shaikh apprehended that the design was to upset the sale of the property altogether, which would entail great loss to him. He represented that there were indications in the attitude of the Turkish authorities which alarmed him with regard to the future, that this particular matter had become pressing and that by virtue of his treaty with the British Government, he looked to them to devise means for the protection of his interests. The Government of India, in reporting the matter to the Secretary of State pointed out that there had recently been other indications of a revival of Turkish interest in Kuwait affairs, which suggested that a more active policy by Turkey in this direction was being initiated.

In July 1910, the Shaikh again appealed urgently to the Resident for the protection of his interests, and Colonel Cox, in reporting the matter, stated that he should be glad to make some re-assuring communication to the Shaikh.

The Government of India, in addressing the Secretary of State in the matter stated, that it was not clear whether the action of the Vali in demanding the registration of the Shaikh's sons as Turkish subjects was merely the strict carrying out of the provision of a law of general application in the Basrah Vilayat, which had become a dead letter under the old *régime*, or was an arbitrary departure from ordinary usage adopted in the hope of compelling the Shaikh to declare himself or his sons to be of Turkish nationality, as part of the general policy of more active interference in Kuwait affairs. The recent attitude of the Turkish authorities appeared to have genuinely alarmed the Shaikh, and the Government of India, stated that they would be glad if the real intentions of the Porte in regard to the Shaikh's Fadaghia property could be ascertained, and if they could be authorised to make some re-assuring communication to the Shaikh. It was also reported that the Vali had declined to permit the registration of some lands above Falhyieh in Turkish limits, purchased last year by the Shaikh of 'Mohammerah, and that the latter had decided to let the registration question remain in abeyance pending a settlement of Shaikh Mubarak's case.

As an instance of a tendency to a revival of Turkish interest in Kuwait affairs it may be mentioned that the Vali of Basrah had recently made overtures to Shaikh Mubarak to induce him to agree to the installation of a telegraph line from Basrah or Fao to Kuwait, which the Vali represented would be a boon to the merchants in their commercial dealings and to the Shaikh himself by bringing him into close touch with his properties on the Shatt-el-Arab and with the Turkish authorities. The Shaikh was said to have disparaged the idea, arguing that, apart from the initial expense, which would presumably fall on the Turks, there would be constant trouble with the Bedouin, who would certainly be always cutting the wire and harassing the telegraph officials, and also that there was little chance of the scheme paying its way, as the regular weekly mail service was ordinarily sufficient for the needs of Kuwait. In reporting this, Colonel Cox expressed a hope that the financial outlook now made it possible for the Government of India to take into lively consideration the question of a wireless installation at Kuwait as part of the general scheme for permanent wireless installations in the Gulf.

Colonel Cox was informed in reply (July 6, 1910) that the Government of India, recognised the importance of establishing a telegraph station at Kuwait, and had also considered the question in connection with the proposed temporary installations of wireless telegraphy at Bushire, Bahrain and Debai, but had decided to defer action until next autumn when the scheme for permanent installations in the Persian Gulf, including Kuwait would again be considered. But apparently before he received the above communication, Colonel Cox again urged the necessity of establishing a telegraph station at Kuwait, arguing that the considerations set forth in favour of the proposal in 1907 and again in 1908 and 1909, still held good, and meanwhile the arms traffic menace had become much more acute and affected Kuwait and also parts of the Turkish Empire in close proximity to the Gulf. He, therefore, recommended that the proposed establishment should now be taken in hand as an item of the Arms Blockade operations, since at the present juncture there were the most obvious and cogent grounds for doing so, and the Porte would be unable to oppose it seriously, whereas, if this excellent and specific opportunity were lost and the



Turks continued in their present active policy at the head of the Gulf, the proposed establishment would become a matter of considerable political difficulty. He added that locally it was always the first step which was difficult in these matters, and in the present case, once a wireless station was installed, even ostensibly as a temporary measure, the Kuwait public would come to appreciate its utility and convenience, while the Basrah authorities would get used to it, so that any subsequent difficulty in making the station a permanency would seem to be unlikely.

Another instance of tendency on the part of Turkey to revive its influence in Kuwait was a report by the Shaikh that the Vali of Basrah had informed him that the Turkish Ministers of War and of the Interior had sent orders to take 21 persons from Kuwait for gendarmerie service in Hasa. His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople learnt from the Minister of the Interior that he had sent no such orders, but on a reference to Kuwait it was found that the Vali had actually made the demand to the Shaikh and offered to supply pay, food and clothing to the men, who would be placed under a Turkish Commander. Shaikh Mubarak stated that he expressed to the Vali his inability to supply Kuwait subjects, as they were engaged in their own professions, but that, if Arabs were required, he thought that men from Central Arabia, of the class who took up service with well-to-do people, might be available for the service. The Vali said he only wanted Kuwait men on whom the Shaikh would have a hold, and to this the Shaikh replied regretting his inability to assist the Vali.

In addition to the foregoing instances of attempts on the part of Turkey to establish her influence in Kuwait, there were rumours in July 1910 of a proposal to send a Turkish detachment to Kuwait, and of the offer of official Turkish recognition of the Shaikh as the responsible Chief for practically the whole of North-East Arabia and Nejd. Meetings between the Shaikh and the Vali had lately been much more frequent, and Kuwait, which formerly scarcely ever figured in Arabic newspapers, now found mention in the Cairo papers under the heading of Basrah news. This was generally corroborated by the Russian Consul at Basrah, who, informed Captain Shakespear that the Vali of Basrah had frequently mentioned to him the status of Kuwait, which, the Russian Consul was convinced, the Turks regarded as being under distinct subjection to them, and that to prevent the possibility of the place vanishing beyond their hold, as had happened in the cases of Maskat and Bahrain, owing to their own negligence, the Turks would probably make some serious effort to establish in Kuwait an indubitable visible sign of their predominance. The Shaikh himself too had admitted that the Vali was endeavouring to bring about some way of introducing Turkish influence into Kuwait; and while the Shaikh expressed himself as averse to this, he was compelled to meet the Vali amicably and to do nothing likely to arouse his animosity for fear of reprisals on his (the Shaikh's) properties on the Shatt-el-Arab.

Dr. Bennett of the American Dutch Reform Church Mission established a medical dispensary at Kuwait in 1910. The Shaikh furnished the Mission with a large house (one of his own properties), and formal agreements were exchanged on the 26th April 1910. Both parties requested the Political Agent at Kuwait to sign the agreement as a witness, and he complied with their wishes. The lease is for five years and the rent payable to the Shaikh is Rs. 300 *per annum*. Dr. Bennett informed the Political Agent that he hoped to have no difficulty in renewing the lease at the end of the term, for an indefinite period, if the Mission had not, by that time, acquired or built property of their own.

In January 1910, Shaikh Mubarak asked for a gift of blank ammunition for the 3-pr. Hotchkiss gun, which was one of two guns which had been presented to him by Government the year before. Both Captain Shakespear and Major Trevor recommended the request, and the Government of India sanctioned a free annual supply up to a limit of 300 rounds.



In 1905 a memorial was received from Shaikh Esa protesting against the interference of the British Government in the internal administration of the island.

Bahrain.

(1) *Shaikh Esa's memorial to the Government of India.*

The memorial was referred to Major Cox for remarks.

On receipt of Major Cox's report, the Government of India, on the 22nd May 1906, sent a reply to the Shaikh through the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. The reply dealt with all the points raised in the memorial. The Shaikh having complained that he was obliged to interdict the sale of arms and was thereby deprived of an advantage enjoyed by all the Arab Chiefs along the Arabian Coast, the Government of India explained that the restriction on the importation of arms at Bahrain was first imposed by the Shaikh himself on his own initiative and drew his attention to the measures taken by him spontaneously from time to time to stop the traffic. It was pointed out to Shaikh Esa that the Shaikh of Kuwait and the Shaikhs of the Trucial Coast had similarly prohibited the traffic in arms in their territory and that his statement that he had been deprived of an advantage enjoyed by other Chiefs on the coast was, therefore, incorrect. The Shaikh was given to understand that the Government of India would not consider for a moment the possibility of cancelling or modifying the agreement into which he had entered with the British Government with regard to the restriction of the traffic in arms since it was essential, for the preservation of the public peace, that the traffic in arms along the Arabian Coast should be rigidly confined and limited. As regards the substitution of an English representative for the former Muhammadan Agent, which formed a subject of protest by the Shaikh, he was informed that the altered political and commercial conditions of Bahrain had rendered necessary the presence of a more efficient representative of the Government of India in the island, on whose advice the Shaikh could confidently rely, and that the benefits accruing from the presence of a British officer were testified to by the great increase of trade which the merchants of Bahrain had enjoyed. In connection with the Shaikh's allegation that he had received no reply to the representations preferred by him and with reference to the fact that he employed a commercial firm as a medium for transmitting his memorial to His Majesty's Secretary of State, the Government of India reminded the Shaikh that it was the duty of British representatives to communicate fully to Government the circumstances and wishes of Chiefs to whom they were accredited, but that the Government of India could only consider his communications when received through the responsible officers with whom he was in touch. The Shaikh was informed that it was both unnecessary and incorrect for him to forward a copy of his petition to the Secretary of State for India, through the medium of a commercial firm.

In February 1906, His Majesty's Government informed the Persian Govern-

(2) *Persian claims to sovereignty over Bahrain. Flogging of a Bahraini subject by the Deputy Governor of Lingah.*

ment that they had never admitted the ownership or sovereignty of Persia over Bahrain. They considered the island of Bahrain and its inhabitants to be under

British protection, and declined to entertain any further representation on the subject. This reply had invariably been made to the Ottoman Government on the several occasions when they had advanced a claim to Bahrain.

With reference to the foregoing communication to the Persian Government, the Grand Vizier handed a note to Mr. Grant Duff on the 13th September 1906, in which it was stated that the spirit of the Treaties explained and demonstrated the rights of the Persian Government over the island of Bahrain, and that the claims now urged by the British Government, had never been put forward before. The Grand Vizier mentioned in the note an agreement made in 1822 between the high officials of the two Governments, in which the island of Bahrain had been recognised as a dependency of the Province of Fars. The Agreement in question was, however, invalid, as it had been disavowed by the Indian Government in the most explicit manner, and further appeared to have failed to secure the sanction of the Shah. No reply was sent to the Grand Vizier's communication, as the Persian Government had already been informed that His Majesty's Government declined to entertain any further representations on the subject of the Persian claim to sovereignty over Bahrain.

In January 1907, Sir C. Spring-Rice addressed a note to the Grand Vizier, in which he reminded him that, as the Agreement of 30th August 1822, quoted by him in support of Persian claims to the sovereignty of Bahrain, was entirely contrary to the views of the British Government, letters were, at the time, written to the Prince of Shiraz disavowing the Treaty in strong terms and renouncing the recall of Captain Bruce who had been responsible for it.

In February 1907, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf submitted a copy of a despatch addressed to His Majesty's Consul at Mohammerah by Sir C. Spring-Rice, in which the latter, referring to the subject of protection of Bahrainis in Persia by British Consular officers, said that the whole question was one which had never been satisfactorily settled with the Persian Government. Sir C. Spring-Rice considered it undesirable that it should be brought forward in an acute form at the present moment, and he, therefore, requested that great circumspection might be exercised in issuing certificates to Bahrainis. Protection was only to be afforded to those persons whose right to be considered subjects of Bahrain was undoubted.

On the 5th of February 1907 the Grand Vizier addressed a note to Sir C. Spring-Rice in which he stated that the agreement of the 30th August 1822 was one which had been effected between the officials of the two Governments, and that the abrogation of it was not known to the Persian Government who considered it binding. An officially appointed British officer had recognised the right of the Persian Government over the island in question and had given evidence as to the status of the island at the time, testifying to the rights of Persia as an eye-witness. He added that even if the agreement had, as was supposed by the British Government, been abrogated, that would not settle the matter. Sir C. Spring-Rice replied on the 23rd of February that he was surprised to note that the Persian Government knew nothing of the abrogation of the agreement and that they considered it binding. He remarked that no agreement between nations was binding until it had been formally ratified by the proper authorities. According to the information in his possession and which was doubtless also to be found in the archives of the Persian Foreign Office, not only had the Treaty been disavowed by the proper representatives of His Majesty's Government, but His Majesty the Shah had refused to recognise its stipulations and had expressed his displeasure that the Prince of Shiraz should have entered into any engagements with the British Government without his knowledge or instructions. His Majesty's Government approved the terms of Sir C. Spring-Rice's note.

On the 10th of August 1907, the Grand Vizier in acknowledging receipt of Sir C. Spring-Rice's letter, dated 23rd February 1907, pointed out that even if the Agreement of 1822 had not, as was stated, been put into execution, it did not affect the object of the Persian Government concerning the Agreement in question since the responsible officials of the British Government at that time had recognised the position of the island and the rights of Persia over it.

In replying on the 13th August, Sir C. Spring-Rice reminded the Persian Government of the terms of Mr. Grant-Duff's letter of the 19th February 1906, and of his letter of the 23rd February last. He pointed out that, according to documents in the possession of His Majesty's Government, not only the superior British authority, but the Shah of Persia, had expressly disavowed the action of their subordinate officials in 1822, and consequently according to the law and practice of civilised nations those proceedings were null and void. He explained that since 1822, the Turkish Government had raised claims on Bahrain and like the Persian Government had been informed that Bahrain was under British protection.

The question of Persian claims to sovereignty over Bahrain came up again in the following spring.

On the 24th March the Secretary State for India telegraphed to the Government of India that the action of the Lingah Governor in arbitrarily punishing a British protected subject of Bahrain would be the subject of a formal protest to the Persian Government by the British representative at Tehran, and requested that the views of the Political Resident, Bushire, should be obtained as to the action that could be taken locally to vindicate the position of the British Government with

success. At the end of March, Major Cox telegraphed that His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, had suggested to the Foreign Office that, as the Foreign Agents were more or less beyond the control of their Legations, the Political Resident should be authorised to take moderate action locally; and that, acting upon this suggestion, he had informed the Persian Government official in charge of the Persian Gulf ports, who was then away on the Mekran coast, that, unless he telegraphed positive assurances that he would remove his subordinate at Lingah, or undertake, on his return journey, to call at the place and bring him to his bearings in connection with this and other matters, the Resident would have to move the British Minister at Tehran to take more comprehensive action. The official in question had, Major Cox reported, assured him that he would call at the place as suggested; but, as the subordinate continued hostile, the Political Resident recommended that he should be authorised to inform the official in charge of the Persian Gulf ports that he had been directed to insist upon the subordinate's removal and non-re-employment in the Persian Gulf and to demand compensation in the present case. He explained that, as regards the general question, although the Central Government had never relinquished their claim to the ownership of Bahrain, still, before the inauguration of the constitution and the freedom of the Press, a reasonable amount of intervention locally by friendship and informal means was possible. Since the establishment of these institutions, however, ignorant local officials, inflated with Nationalist sentiment and anti-Foreign newspaper articles, and often directly prompted by members of the young Persian party and foreign Agents, disputed the right of the British Government to protect subjects of Bahrain and the Trucial Chiefs in Persia. It was, therefore, necessary for the British Government to assert itself, and Major Cox urged that the Persian Government should be informed, if possible, that it was obligatory to intimate that there would, in future, be the same intervention on behalf of Bahrainis and subjects of Trucial Chiefs as in the case of British Indians, and that the necessary steps would be taken to make such intervention good.

The Secretary of State was acquainted by the Government of India with the views of the Political Resident, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs telegraphed to the Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, that there was no objection to the local action which the Political Resident proposed, but that the terms in which the demand to be made locally was to be communicated to the Persian Government required careful consideration. He asked to be informed what action Mr. Marling would recommend in order to enforce British rights, should redress be refused. In reply, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires telegraphed that the Persian Government had informed him that instructions had been sent to Lingah to make reparation, but that it was claimed that the proprietary rights of Persia over the island was not a matter to be disputed. Mr. Marling suggested the occupation, if necessary, of an island in the Gulf, preferably Keis or Cirmuz, to enforce the recognition of the British protectorate. He had urged strongly on the Persian Government the necessity for compliance, suggesting that a note be written to him by the Foreign Minister to the effect that the desired instructions had been communicated to the local authorities in the Persian Gulf, no mention being made of Persian claims.

In accordance with the instructions of His Majesty's Government, Mr. Marling had addressed a note to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 30th March and, in presenting it to His Excellency, said that he hoped that the Persian Government would view the matter in a reasonable light and refrain from again putting forward claims to the sovereignty of Bahrain based on no better grounds than the Treaty of 1822, which had not only never been ratified, but had also been repudiated by both the Persian and British Governments. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh promised to give the question his best attention and to do all he could to bring about a settlement. In a note, however, dated the 9th April to Mr. Marling, the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, while stating that the Persian Government, out of its constant regard for the peace of its subjects, had sent strong orders to the local authorities to make reparation and do the man justice if he had been illegally treated, re-affirmed that Bahrain was a possession of Persia. Mr. Marling later explained to the Mushir-ed-Dowleh the disappointment felt at his written reply and warned him that His Majesty's Government intended to have the question

satisfactorily and definitely settled. It was pointed out to him that for more than one hundred years the British Government had had treaty relations with Bahrain, and that for the same period of time Persia had never made the smallest effort to assert her pretended rights, and that, by the Treaty of 1880, the Chief of Bahrain had placed his foreign relations in the hands of the British Government and that, finally, within the last few years, Persian subjects who had got into trouble in the island had received protection from the British Government. He was asked to address another note stating merely that he had given the necessary orders to the local authorities in the Gulf and, wherever Bahrainis were likely to be found, that the representations of His Majesty's Consular officers on behalf of Bahrainis were to be accepted without reserve. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh promised to do so after consulting his colleagues.

As regards Mr. Marling's suggestion that Ormuz or Keis should be occupied to enforce compliance, His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the act of reparation and justice to the injured Bahraini appeared to constitute in itself a recognition of the right of His Majesty's Government to protect subjects of Bahrain, and that, if the claim of the Persian Government was not reiterated, there was no need to effect or to threaten the occupation of an island in the Persian Gulf in order to enforce the claim.

The importance of coming to a clear understanding as to the rights of the British Government to protect Bahrain subjects and those of the Trucial Chiefs was subsequently enhanced by the action of the Deputy Governor of Lingah, who removed five subjects of Shargah from the mail steamer and imprisoned them without reference to the Residency Agent.

At the end of May, Major Cox reported that he had discussed the case respecting the Bahraini and Shargah subjects with the Darya Begi since his return from tour. The Darya Begi had put in writing with regard to the latter case that his Deputy acted without his knowledge, and that for this and other disputes with the British Agent he had deposed him and promised not to re-employ him during his Governorship. Regarding the Bahraini case, the Governor wrote unofficially that the deposed Deputy stated on oath that he had only taken twenty-five pounds and a few rupees from the Bahraini. The Governor undertook to refund this amount and also any further amount which the Shia Court at Lingah might hold proved after further enquiry.

On the 22nd May, His Majesty's Secretary of State telegraphed that Mr. Marling had been instructed to press for an amended note from the Persian Government and that he had been informed that His Majesty's Government were reluctant to raise the general question at present unless the note disputed the right of the British Government and further cases arose. As regards the subjects of the Shaikh of Shargah, Mr. Marling had also been informed that the assurances given by the Governor of Bushire appeared, if carried out, sufficient to meet the particular case.

Subsequently Sir G. Barclay addressed a note to the Persian Government returning Mushir-ed-Dowleh's note of the 9th April 1908 as being altogether inadmissible.

In February 1909, His Majesty's Government approved Sir G. Barclay's action, but pointed out that the Persian Government should clearly understand that they in no way departed from their attitude in considering the island of Bahrain and its inhabitants to be under British protection, and that the question would be raised again when an opportunity occurred.

On the 22nd January, however, prior to the receipt by Sir G. Barclay of the above communication, the Meftah-es-Sultaneh called on Sir G. Barclay on behalf of the Ala-es-Sultaneh to say that, if he (Sir G. Barclay) would withdraw his note returning the Mushir-ed-Dowleh's objectionable communication, the Persian Government would send him, in substitution for the latter, an amended note in the sense desired. If this arrangement were not accepted, the Persian Government would be obliged to send a strong reply to Sir G. Barclay's note. As this would have raised the general question of Bahrain, for which the moment was considered inopportune, Sir G. Barclay accepted the proposed arrangement and received an amended note from the Persian Government accordingly.

The amended note stated *inter alia* that, by referring to previous notes of the Persian Foreign Ministry regarding Persian claims to sovereignty over Bahrain and its inhabitants, the British Government would be quite enlightened as to the arguments of the Persian Government on the subject.

On the 17th March, Sir E. Grey, in informing Sir G. Barclay that His Majesty's Government had approved his (Sir G. Barclay's) action in accepting the amended note of the Persian Government, pointed out that he should at the same time impress on the latter that His Majesty's Government could not consider the arrangement as final, that they maintained their original attitude on the subject, and that they would be guided entirely by their own views of the position should any action of the Persian authorities make it necessary.

In a telegram to Sir E. Grey, dated the 8th April, Sir G. Barclay deprecated the inclusion, in the communication which he was about to address to the Persian Government intimating to them the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of the amended note, of any statement as to the attitude which the British Government proposed to maintain regarding Bahrain. He feared that such a declaration might raise the general question, which he was unwilling to do, unless His Majesty's Government were prepared to press it to an issue. Sir E. Grey proposed to leave the wording of the communication to Sir G. Barclay's discretion, but considered that His Majesty's Government should continue to show by their acts that they could not permit the Persian Government to exercise sovereignty over Bahraini subjects in Persian territory. In these views the Secretary of State for India concurred.

On the 10th May, Sir E. Grey informed Sir G. Barclay that the communication to the Persian Government could be worded as he thought best. He added, however, that His Majesty's Government could not allow the Persian Government to exercise sovereignty over the inhabitants of Bahrain and that they would continue to act in accordance with this principle.

On the 13th May, Sir G. Barclay addressed a note to the Persian Government informing them that His Majesty's Government had approved his action in accepting the amended note sent him by the Persian Government in January last, but that they maintained, as regards the status of Bahrainis in Persia, the attitude explained in Mr. Marling's note, dated the 30th March 1903, *viz.*, that the island of Bahrain and its inhabitants were considered to be under British protection. Sir G. Barclay added that His Majesty's Government would be guided entirely by their own views of the position should any action of the Persian authorities make representations necessary.

In forwarding a copy of this note to Sir E. Grey on the 4th June, Sir G. Barclay explained that, as the wording of the communication had been left to his discretion, he had omitted the words "His Majesty's Government cannot consider this arrangement as final", as he thought that these words might provoke a reply and that the moment was inopportune for pressing the Bahrain question to an issue.

His Majesty's Government approved the terms of Sir G. Barclay's note to the Persian Government.

In the following spring, however, the Persian Government took action which indicated a fresh attempt on their part to claim sovereignty over Bahrain. Early in 1910 it was reported that the Director of Customs at Bushire had received orders to refund the passport fees to persons who, on proceeding to Bahrain, had hitherto been compelled to take out passport identical with those issued to persons proceeding to a foreign country. They were now to be granted a pass as if going to a Persian port. Mr. Marling, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, reported the matter to His Majesty's Government, proposing, however, to abstain from making any protest unless he was instructed to do so.

His Majesty's Government agreed with him that it would be both undesirable and inconvenient to raise the question of Bahrain by a protest at Tehran, and enquired whether there was any other way in which the inconvenience could be removed. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, who was consulted by Mr. Marling, explained that the position was that, at Persian ports, Karguzars were

obliging Bahrainis and Persians proceeding to Bahrain to take out passes on which were printed the words "this pass is especially for persons proceeding from one Persian port to another." Two krans only were being charged for this pass, but the passenger was also required to leave behind a cash deposit, or good personal security, which on return of the pass *viséd* by a certain Persian merchant at Bahrain, was released. This merchant also issued similar passes to Persians proceeding from Bahrain to Persian ports. He was said to have been troublesome in the past to the Shaikh and the British authorities, and to have written articles frequently for the vernacular Press urging that the Persian claim to sovereignty over Bahrain should be revived. The Political Agent was of opinion that the Shaikh would be glad of an opportunity to expel the merchant from Bahrain and recommended that course. His Majesty's Government agreed to the proposed expulsion, and the Government of India approved of the Political Resident sending instructions to the Political Agent accordingly.

The further development of the matter belongs to a period not comprised in this Summary.

The trade of Bahrain in 1905 showed a considerable increase as compared

(3) *Trade report for 1905.*

with the report for the previous year, the imports having risen from Rs. 1,48,84,129 to Rs. 2,43,01,519, and the exports from Rs. 1,35,07,491 to Rs. 2,04,50,643. The total volume thus showed an increase of 57½ per cent. on the previous year's trade, which itself was the maximum hitherto attained.

The Political Agent remarked that, apart from the evidence of statistics, the general prosperity of the mercantile community was apparent from the numbers of new and substantial buildings in course of construction, the high prices at which lands and houses had changed hands in the towns, and the increasing influx of merchants from other trade centres in the Gulf. This improvement was said to be chiefly due to the increase of confidence and security among all classes of the people, that had resulted from the strong line taken by the Government of India in February 1905 in punishing the unruly Bahrainis whom the Chief himself was unable to keep under control.

The British India Steam Navigation Company, the Political Agent reported, had a practical monopoly of the carriage of cargo in steamers, the Bombay and Persian Steam Navigation Company being the only other shipping line whose vessels visited the port.

On the occasion of Captain Prideaux's visit to Shaikh Jasim's camp at Bu

(4) *Nasir-bin-Mubarak's overtures of reconciliation with Shaikh Esa.*

Hasa, he met there the latter's son-in-law, Nasir-bin-Mubarak, who is an outlawed cousin of Shaikh Esa, Chief of Bahrain.

As a result of the interview, Nasir-bin-Mubarak made a representation to the Government of India expressing his willingness to submit to the existing *régime* in Bahrain and begging that they would mediate to effect a reconciliation between himself and Shaikh Esa. He asked that the latter might be persuaded to bestow suitable allowances upon him and the members of his section.

As, however, the reconciliation was likely to introduce an element of unrest into the politics of Bahrain, which did not then exist, and having regard to the uncompromising hatred which Shaikh Esa bore towards his cousin, the Government of India approved of an answer being sent to Nasir-bin-Mubarak to the effect that, in view of the past, there were not sufficient grounds for intervening to press a reconciliation upon Shaikh Esa, but that in saying this they wished in no way to discourage Nasir-bin-Mubarak from making such friendly efforts on his own behalf to arrive at a reconciliation with his cousin as might seem good to him.

On the 1st October 1906, an individual named Abdur Rahim-bin-Othman

(5) *Case of Turks appealing to British authority in Bahrain. Alleged abduction of a Turkish girl from Baghdad to Bahrain.*

appeared before the Political Agent, Bahrain, and alleged that he had been commissioned by Taufiq Effendi, a clerk in the Customs Department, Basrah, to search at Bahrain for the latter's daughter who had been abducted from Baghdad by certain Ottoman subjects. Abdur Rahim stated that he had found the girl in the house of Ali-bin-Amar, a resident of Kuwait and Bahrain, who claimed to



have purchased her at Kuwait. He requested that the girl might be sent to Basrah and that Ali-bin-Amar might also be forwarded there for trial on the charge of having stolen the girl and allowed her to be cohabited with illegally. The Political Agent summoned Ali-bin-Amar to appear before him and the girl was also produced. The latter admitted that she was of Turkish origin and had come from Baghdad, but as she refused to state her father's name, and as Abdur Rahim had never seen her before, there was no evidence of her identity with the girl said to have been abducted from Baghdad. Ali-bin-Amar stated that he would produce documents signed by the Kazi of Kuwait to prove that the girl had been married to his son. The Political Agent, thereupon, placed the girl in charge of a respectable Arab merchant, and instructed Abdur Rahim that if he wished to prove his story, he should summon the father of the missing girl to Bahrain to produce evidence of her identity with the girl produced.

On the 4th October 1906, the Vali of Basrah made a representation on the same subject to His Britannic Majesty's Consul at that place. The Vali requested that the girl might be handed over to Abdur Rahim and that the culprits might be handed over under guard to the same person for transmission to Basrah for punishment. The Consul, after consultation with the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, replied that the identity of the girl had not been established, and that in order to prove it either the complainant or an agent properly authorised by him should proceed to Bahrain. Mr. Crow added that the Ottoman subjects who had taken the girl from Baghdad did not appear to be at Bahrain and that Ali-bin-Amar, who, according to his statement, had purchased the girl at Kuwait, was not a Turkish subject but a subject of the Shaikh of Bahrain.

In a letter addressed to the Chief of Bahrain on the same subject, the Vali of Basrah made the same request as he had made to His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Basrah. Under advice from the Political Agent Shaikh Esa refrained from replying to the Vali unless and until he should receive instructions from the Government of India to do so. He wrote also to Abdur Rahim reiterating the reply which had already been given to the latter by the Political Agent and referring him for further information to the British Government.

On the 7th February 1907, the Government of India addressed the Secretary of State for India on the subject and stated that they proposed, if the Secretary of State agreed, to approve the action taken by the local Political Officers in the matter. They regarded it as satisfactory that the Turks, with a view to securing redress, had had to recognise and appeal to British authority in Bahrain and they considered that this incident had done much to support the British Protectorate over Bahrain. They proposed to leave it to the Turkish authorities to make the next move in the matter, and stated that it seemed desirable to restore the girl to her father and even to try formally the man 'Ali-bin-Amar' if the Turkish authorities sent the girl's father to Bahrain and agreed to recognise the jurisdiction of the joint Court held there under British auspices.

In a despatch of the 26th April to the Government of India, the Secretary of State for India concurred generally in the proposals of the Government of India. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was accordingly informed.

On the 17th November 1907, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported that the case had been tried by the local Kazi and that the result of the trial had been satisfactory. At the commencement of the trial the defendant, Ali produced a letter from the Kazi of Kuwait certifying that the girl had been married in his presence to his servant Bashir, but the Kazi of Manama had elicited the information that Bashir was a slave at the time and for this and various technical reasons ruled that the marriage was null and void and declared that after the expiry of the period of "iddat" the girl would be at liberty to marry where she liked. The Political Agent reported that the Turkish subject, Abdur Rahim-bin-Othman, was absent from Bahrain and that no other Turkish subjects had evinced any interest in the case.

On the 4th April 1909, the Political Agent at Bahrain reported that, in March

(6) *Ottoman jurisdiction not recognised south of Ojair. Policy of British Government to maintain status quo.*

last, the Mudir of Ojair had visited Zakhnuniyah, a small island ten miles south of Ojair, and had run up the Turkish flag there. The island has no permanent inhabitants, but



is claimed by the Shaikh of Bahrain and is frequented by the Bahrain Dowasir in winter. The Political Agent visited the island on the 18th March and found the Turkish flag attached to a mast on the fort. He was told by the Dowasir that the Mudir had asked them whether they came under Turkish rule. They replied in the negative and refused to comply with the Mudir's request to run up and lower the Turkish flag daily. On the 6th May, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf telegraphed that the Turks had repaired the tower on the island and had arranged to keep a guard of 20 men there, relieving them from Ojair daily. The Shaikh of Bahrain protested against Turkish occupation, stating that the fort was built by his father, Shaikh Ali, with the concurrence of the Nejd Amir, and that the former used to keep a garrison on the island.

In reporting the matter to the Secretary of State for India on the 23rd May, the Government of India expressed the opinion that the Shaikh's claim should be supported, as His Majesty's Government had never recognised Ottoman jurisdiction as extending south of Ojair. They recommended that the Porte should be told that the island belonged to Bahrain and should be urged to issue orders to the Mudir to remove the garrison from the island. The Government of India also supported Major Cox's recommendation that the Shaikh should be advised to fly his flag there.

On the 4th June, the Secretary of State for India telegraphed that His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople had been instructed to bring the facts of the case to the notice of the Porte and to request them to issue instructions for the withdrawal of the garrison on the ground of avoiding any disturbance of the *status quo*. His Majesty's Government were of opinion that it appeared desirable not to raise the question of a British protectorate over Bahrain in the first instance. As to the proposal to advise the Shaikh to fly his own flag on Zakhnuniyah island, they proposed to await the result of their representations to the Porte before deciding on any line of action.

In a telegram dated 13th October, His Majesty's Secretary of State for India stated that the Vali of Basrah had informed the Turkish Government that the Turkish guard placed on the island was withdrawn to Ojair early in June last. The Secretary of State desired that the Shaikh should not be allowed to hoist his flag on the island, if the report should prove to be correct. He added that the policy of His Majesty's Government was to avoid disturbance of the *status quo*. Major Trevor reported in his letter of the 28th November 1909, that the Chief of Bahrain had expressed a wish to be able to fly his flag on the Zakhnuniyah island during the winter months while his subject tribesmen were there. Captain Mackenzie was opposed for various reasons to the proposal of the Shaikh, and Major Trevor thought that if the flag was to be hoisted at all it should be at intervals all the year round and not only for a few months during the year. The Government of India informed Major Trevor that the Shaikh's proposal might raise questions of policy and disturb the *status quo*, and that they were unable to accord permission to the Shaikh to fly his flag on the island. Should the Chief repeat his proposal, he should be told that as no flag had been flown since the time of his father, it seemed unnecessary at the present juncture to depart from established precedent.

In September 1908, His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople

(7) *British protection of Bahrainis in the Ottoman Dominions.*

forwarded to Sir E. Grey a copy of correspondence which had passed between himself and Mr. Geary (Acting British Consul at Basrah) regarding the desire of certain subjects of the Chief of Bahrain to be registered at the Consulate. Mr. Geary reported that the men were in possession of passports from their Chief and also of a document signed by Major Prideaux, Political Agent at Bahrain, recommending them to the good offices of British Consular officials. The Ottoman Government had attempted to enforce military service in the Turkish Army on one of these men, who had protested against the attempt and appealed to the Consulate for protection. Mr. Geary refused their demand as they appeared to have no claim to British nationality, but asked for instructions as to the extent to which protection, if any, should be afforded to such claimants. In reply, Sir Gerard Lowther, His Majesty's Ambassador, Constantinople, quoted instances in which His

Majesty's Government had repudiated Turkish and Persian claims to sovereignty over Bahrain, and pointed out that, in 1871, a formal assurance had been given by Turkey "that the Porte entertained no intention whatever of obtaining supremacy over Bahrain." His Majesty's Government had consistently maintained the right of British Consular representatives to give their good offices to Bahrainis applying for them. Mr. Geary was accordingly instructed to extend protection to the natives of Bahrain in conformity with these precedents.

Later, the question of British protection of Bahrainis in the Ottoman dominions cropped up again. In November 1909, at the request of the British Resident at Bushire, Mr. Crow, British Consul at Basrah, had informed the Vali that the estate of an Ottoman subject of Baghdad, who had died at Bahrain, had been transmitted to the British Consul-General at Baghdad for payment to the deceased's brother. The Vilayat of Basrah had previously written to the Shaikh of Bahrain on the subject and the Vali's letter had been handed by the Shaikh to the British Political Agent at Bahrain for the necessary action. The British Resident desired Mr. Crow to point out to the Vali that it would save inconvenience if, in future, similar communications were addressed direct by the Vilayat to the British Political Agent at Bahrain, that island being under British protection. Mr. Crow accordingly informed the Vali, who seemed perturbed at the statement, and telegraphed to his Government asking whether he should not rebut any such contention on the part of the British Government. The Vali subsequently informed Mr. Crow that he had been instructed not to protest against, but at the same time not to accept, any assertion regarding the status of Bahrain. Mr. Crow suggested to the British Ambassador at Constantinople that it would be advisable for him (Mr. Crow) to communicate to the Vali the substance of the instructions sent by Sir G. Lowther to Mr. Geary, the Acting British Consul at Basrah, in September 1908, in order to show him that the intervention of British Consuls in Turkey on behalf of natives of Bahrain was well established. Sir G. Lowther had no objection to his communicating the substance of the instructions to the Vali, and in reporting the matter to His Majesty's Government, Sir G. Lowther proposed, in view of the instructions received by the Vali on the subject, to take no further action in the matter at Constantinople. His Majesty's Government approved this action.

In December 1900, certain relatives and subjects of the Shaikh of Bahrain had been murdered near Katif by a band of the Behaih tribe. The Shaikh had been dissuaded from punishing the offending tribe himself, and His Majesty's Government had endeavoured by negotiation with the Porte to obtain satisfaction for the murder, but without result.

Towards the close of 1905, the Political Agent examined the question afresh in the light of more recent developments. He deprecated the grant of permission to Shaikh Esa to settle accounts with the Behaih in his own way, and, as an alternative, suggested that the Porte should be pressed energetically on Shaikh Esa's behalf to give pecuniary compensation, and to intern for a time several members of the tribe as a guarantee for the future good behaviour of the remainder, also if the Porte expressed inability to comply with the demands, to respond with local retaliatory measures.

The Government of India, in explaining the situation to His Majesty's Government in January 1906, observed that the matter had been the subject of discussion with the Turkish Government for five years without any practical advance having been made towards the reparation to which the Shaikh was entitled. It was further urged that the murder of the Bahrainis being the result of a blood-feud, it might be considered alike impolitic to grant the Shaikh sanction to revenge himself in debatable territory, or to press the Ottoman Government either to exact punishment which clearly lay beyond their power, or to give compensation which they had reasonable cause for refusing. It was probably better, although not altogether satisfactory, to accept the Turkish assertion that 37 out of the 50 individuals concerned had been accounted for and to tell the Shaikh that it was not proposed to press for further action in the case of an outrage arising out of a tribal feud. Unless therefore, His Majesty's Government were prepared to

press the claim for compensation at Constantinople it was not desirable to pursue the matter any further so far as the Turks are directly concerned.

His Majesty's Government decided to accept this view and to take no further action. They considered, however, that the Shaikh of Bahrain might be advised that he held a further remedy in his own hands, as he is competent to exclude from Bahrain members of any tribes which are in a position to exercise pressure upon the Behaih.

At the beginning of 1908, the Political Agent, Bahrain, recommended, on

(9) *Grant of permission to Shaikh Ali-bin-Ahmad-el-Khalifa to return to Bahrain.*

the application of the Shaikh of Bahrain, that Shaikh Ali-bin-Ahmed-el-Khalifa, the latter's nephew, who had been implicated in an outrage on certain Persians at Bahrain as well as in an attack on a German subject and who had consequently been deported to Bombay, might be permitted to return from exile, and intimated the conditions on which Shaikh Ali had bound himself to be of good behaviour. The Resident in the Gulf supported the proposal, but with a view to insuring Shaikh Ali's future good behaviour, arranged that the allowance to be paid to him by his father, should be paid through the Political Agent. The Government of India sanctioned the arrangement, and Shaikh Ali returned to Bahrain on the 14th August 1908.

In February 1906, Major Cox reported that the Shaikh of Bahrain had arrested

(10) *Theft committed by Gwaduris.*

11 Gwaduri subjects of the Sultan of Maskat, forming the crew of a British Indian dhow, on a charge of having dishonestly sold *en route* a portion of the cargo consigned to a subject of the Shaikh of Bahrain, and that the Shaikh had asked the Political Agent to deal with the case. Captain Prideaux considered the men guilty on the strength of the evidence produced and on their own confession and recommended that he be allowed to give them six months' imprisonment.

It was discovered, as the result of enquiries, that the offence had been committed in Persian waters, and the Government of India, therefore, decided that the Shaikh of Bahrain, who has no jurisdiction over foreigners in respect of offences committed beyond the territories of Bahrain, could not confer on the Political Agent authority to try the case. The Political Agent had no Admiralty jurisdiction over aliens, and therefore could not try the case as a Protectorate Court. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was accordingly instructed to release the prisoners, who had already been in confinement for the greater part of the period for which it had been proposed to sentence them.

The Shaikh of Bahrain has no jurisdiction over foreigners in respect of offences committed outside British territory.

In reply to the Secretary of State's enquiry as to how the case of a Persian

(11) *Disposal of case against a Persian subject accused of an offence committed on board a British ship in Bahrain harbour.*

subject who had committed an offence in Bahrain harbour should be dealt with, the Government of India telegraphed, on the 6th April 1906, that the practice was for the Political Officer to dispose of such cases, the representative of the Shaikh being present. It was stated that, as the Persian Government had recently been notified formally that the island of Bahrain was under British protection, there appeared to be no reason why the Political Officers should not follow the ordinary practice, especially as the offence in question was committed in connection with a British vessel. The Political Officer's action could be justified on the ground that he exercised jurisdiction either delegated by the Shaikh or derived from his position as representative of the protecting Power. Major Cox reported on the 21st April, that the offender, having restored the money stolen, had been released by the Political Agent on bail in anticipation of sanction.

His Majesty's Secretary of State telegraphed on the 1st May 1906, that it was very undesirable at the moment to raise the question of jurisdiction with Persia in connection with the trial of the Persian prisoner at Bahrain, and asked for further particulars, with regard to the case, and especially for information as to the whereabouts of the accused. In reply to a reference made, the Political Resident reported that the accused was still at Bahrain, that he was working regularly at the Agency

at the trade of a carpenter which he had learnt while in custody and that it was not probable that he would leave Bahrain. The Government of India accordingly telegraphed to His Majesty's Secretary of State on the 22nd May that they considered it unnecessary to take any further action in the matter in view of the restoration of the property, and having regard to the fact that the offender had already suffered incarceration for a period of two months. They proposed, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, to inform the Political Resident that the bail bond which had been taken from him on his release might be cancelled.

In reply His Majesty's Secretary of State telegraphed on the 13th June, approving of the proposal to instruct the Political Resident that the bail bond, which had been taken from the Persian offender on his release, might be cancelled. The Resident was instructed accordingly.

The efforts of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf to secure compensation from the Persian Government for the murder, in 1902, of four subjects of the Chief of Abu Thabi by Persian subjects residing in Taona have hitherto

**Trucial coast.**

*(1) Murder of subjects of Abu Thabi by Persian subjects.*

proved unsuccessful. The Persian Government, while refusing to pay the blood-money demanded, assured His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, that the murderers had been apprehended. But, during the pearling season in 1908, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf received intelligence that two of the murderers, whom the Persian Government had officially announced to be dead, were alive and on the pearl banks. Major Cox accordingly, in July 1908, reported the fact to His Majesty's Legation, Tehran, and asked for authority to instruct the Senior Naval Officer to detail one of the subsidised ships to effect their capture at sea, if possible. Mr. Marling, in communicating the information to Sir E. Grey, expressed his concurrence in the proposal to attempt the capture of the men, and enquired whether it would be possible, if sufficient evidence were forthcoming, to send them to India for trial. His Majesty's Secretary of State for India informed the Government of India that they proposed to approve the suggested attempt to capture the murderers, but that, as there were difficulties from the point of view of International law, in sending them to India for trial, the best course would be, owing to the improbability of obtaining punishment or compensation through a trial in the Persian Court, to send the men to Abu Thabi for trial and punishment, and to detain them there till the Chief of Taona paid compensation for the victims' families. It was suggested (in the alternative) that the men might be detained at Abu Thabi till a satisfactory undertaking had been obtained that they would be properly tried and punished on their return to Persian soil. The Government of India replied that they saw no objection to the issue of instructions to the above effect to Mr. Marling. The latter was accordingly requested by His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to instruct Major Cox to adopt whichever of the alternatives he thought preferable. Major Cox adopted the second alternative. In September, however, he telegraphed that news received from the Residency Agent at Lingah, showed that, as the men had finished pearling operations and returned home, the time had passed for action at sea. He also reported that the third brother, who was until recently in prison at Shiraz, had returned to his country having gained his freedom.

A further report received by Major Cox, in October, from the Residency Agent, showed that the Zabits of Nakl-i-Amir and Taona and the Governor of Bustek had one and all assisted the pirates at one stage or another and had directly or indirectly partaken of the proceeds of the outrage; also, that a fourth local headman, the Zabit of the port of Moghu, had been added to the list. Major Cox was inclined to think that the best course was to use these details as a basis for another insistent demand for the payment of compensation. He stated that, if the Persian Government would capture the men, it would be so much the better, but he earnestly deprecated any pretended or real endeavours on their part to capture them being allowed to block the demand for the payment of compensation. He asked for the views or instructions of the Tehran Legation on the matter.

In view of the fact that the murderers, who during the summer were at the pearl fisheries, had now retired inland, and that the chances of capturing them were remote, Sir G. Barclay, His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, had addressed a further note to the Persian Government, in December, pressing for an early settlement of the question of compensation to the families of the murdered men, and informed Major Cox of the action which he had taken, suggesting to him that the question of the punishment of the men still at large should be held over until the spring, when, if they returned to the pearl fisheries, they might perhaps be captured. His Majesty's Government approved the terms of Sir G. Barclay's note to the Persian Government.

On the 19th February 1909, Sir G. Barclay informed the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf that the Persian Government, in reply to the note which he had addressed them on the subject of the Taona murders, had once more repeated their inability to do anything further in the case, and had absolutely denied that the two men, seen last year at the pearl-fisheries, were still alive. He consequently felt unable to approach that Government again for the present, but he would be glad to use in a further representation to them any further evidence that came to the knowledge of the Political Resident. The latter will endeavour to effect the capture of the men during the present diving season.

The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported, on the 23rd July, that H. M. S. *Redbreast* had captured one of the three murderers on the pearl banks.

The man had been sent to Abu Thabi, where he would be kept in custody pending the result of endeavours to catch the other two men.

On the 20th August, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf telegraphed to His Britannic Majesty's Minister, Tehran, that the new Shaikh of Abu Thabi had refused to accept responsibility for the safe custody of the pirate on the grounds that the relations of the murdered men then in Abu Thabi would make trouble if the prisoner were not delivered into their hands. He was, therefore, for the time being left in the custody of the Political Agent, Bahrain.

On hearing of the capture of their brother, the other two brothers fled to the mainland and the Shaikh of Charek promised to do his best to effect their apprehension. Major Cox, however, was doubtful of success and added that His Majesty's ships would not be able to act again for some time.

As the prisoner would, in all probability, be allowed to escape, as one brother did from Shiraz, if he were handed over to the local authorities, Major Cox asked His Majesty's Minister, Tehran, whether he saw any objection to the retention of the prisoner by the Political Agent, Bahrain, for the present.

On the 27th August, Sir G. Barclay informed Sir E. Grey that he was authorising the British Consul-General at Bushire to send the prisoner to Abu Thabi for trial, as Major Cox apprehended no difficulty about the trial being held there. The Shaikh had only demurred to keeping the man at Abu Thabi for an indefinite period until the other two offenders should be captured.

The Residency Agent at Shargah reported on the 25th January 1907 to the

(2) *Release of the Shaikh of Umm-el-Kowein and his retainers, who were treacherously imprisoned by the Shaikh of Abu Thabi.*

Political Resident that the Shaikh of Umm-el-Kowein, while on a friendly visit to the Shaikh of Abu Thabi in response to an invitation, had suddenly been seized and put in chains, together with his companions. The retainers were sent back in custody to Abu Thabi, while the Shaikh of Abu Thabi, taking the imprisoned Shaikh with him advanced northwards intending to attack Umm-el-Kowein and to raze to the ground the post of Falai. When this news was received, Major Cox was already about to proceed to the Trucial coast with H. M. S. *Proserpine* for the purpose of inducing the Shaikh of Shargah to settle some claims under the agreement between the Trucial Shaikhs regarding absconding pearl-divers.

On his arrival, Major Cox sent letters immediately to the Shaikhs of Shargah and Abu Thabi calling on the former who was absent from headquarters to re-

turn to Shargah to interview him, and to settle the claims in question, and calling on the latter either to release his prisoner immediately or send him in to the Resident. Major Cox undertook, on the release of the Shaikh, to endeavour to make a satisfactory settlement between the contending parties. The Shaikh of Shargah, after some hesitation, appeared and complied with the Resident's demands with regard to the pearling claims.

The Shaikh of Abu Thabi was at first disinclined to release his prisoner, but eventually did so on receipt of a further letter from Major Cox in which his conduct was stigmatised as treacherous and a violation of the spirit of the maritime truce.

On the 25th February, the Resident presided at a meeting of the Shaikhs of Umm-el-Kowein, Shargah, and Debai (the last two also answering for the Shaikh of Abu Thabi), for the formulation, if possible, of terms for a settlement between them all. After many hours of tedious negotiation, conditions were at last formulated, acceptable of all, and before the meeting concluded, the three Shaikhs had joined hands and taken the oath of peace in the usual formal manner. Major Cox, in reporting the incident to the Government of India stated that the peace established was not likely to last longer than compacts usually do, but that he had brought them all into line for the time being. Major Cox, further suggested, in order to prevent a recurrence of similar incidents, that he should be instructed to issue a circular homily to the Trucial Chiefs in comment on the recent capture of the Shaikh of Umm-el-Kowein, warning them that any similar act on the part of one Trucial Shaikh against another in the future would be severely noticed by the Government of India. The Government of India, in replying, informed Major Cox that they approved the action taken by him in securing the release of the Shaikh of Umm-el-Kowein and his retinue, and that they recognised that the satisfactory issue of the incident should be attributed mainly to the firmness, promptitude, and discretion with which he had handled the matter. They did not, however, consider it necessary to issue a circular warning of the kind suggested by him as they hoped that the compact which he had succeeded in bringing about by the exercise of his personal influence would have the effect of preventing a recurrence of hostilities in the near future.

On the 27th June 1909, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported that

(3) *Death of the Chief of Abu Thabi and succession of his son, Shaikh Tahnoon bin Zaeed, to the Chiefship.*

Shaikh Zaeed bin Khalifa, the aged Shaikh of Abu Thabi, had died on the 19th May last, and that the succession had passed to his second son, Shaikh Tahnoon bin Zaeed.

The latter wrote to Major Cox informing him of his assumption of the Chiefship and expressing his determination to maintain the close relations which have existed between his ancestors and the British Government. The Government of India provisionally recognised his succession pending his acceptance of the terms of the treaties with the Trucial Chiefs to which he had become subject.

In his letter dated the 20th March 1910, Major Trevor reported that Shaikh

(4) *Murder of Shaikh Abdul Aziz and accession of his son, Shaikh Humaid, to the Chiefship of Ajman.*

Abdul Aziz, Chief of Ajman, was murdered by his slave on the 16th February 1910. The late Chief's son, Shaikh Humaid, had left for Maskat before the incident, and

on his return the tribesmen appointed him their Chief in place of his father. Shaikh Humaid afterwards communicated to the Resident his acceptance of all the treaty engagements with his father; and Colonel Cox was instructed to communicate to the Shaikh Government's recognition of his new position.

In June 1905, Mr. Crow, Consul at Basrah, brought to the notice of the Gov-

Hasa.

(1) *The Hasa Post.*

ernment of India that the creation of a Turkish Steamship Company on the Persian Gulf was being considered by the Ottoman

Government and that the Vali of Basrah had proposed (1) to establish a direct line between Basrah, Jeddah and Constantinople for facilitating Government business and promoting trade, and (2) to organize a direct postal service between Basrah and Hasa, by means of the new line.



Under the arrangements then existing, there was no established mail service between Basrah and Ojair on the Hasa coast, and the Turkish authorities at Basrah were farming out the mail contract to a private farmer who either handed the mail bag to the British India Company's pilot or committed it to the care of native passengers proceeding to Hasa. Consul Crow enquired, at the instance of the Vali, whether the British India Steam Navigation Company could contract with the Turkish Government for the conveyance of the Hasa mail along with British mails for Bahrain, where an Ottoman official would undertake the carriage of the Turkish bags to Ojair, or whether as an alternative the British India Steam Navigation Company itself could undertake the carriage of the mails to Ojair either by the deflection of their slow steamers to that port or by a special boat maintained for the purpose. A suitable arrangement of this kind would, the Consul thought, obviate any inconvenience which might arise from the establishment of a direct Turkish service to Ojair and the presence of Turkish vessels in Bahrain waters.

Major Cox was of opinion that it would be to our interest to oppose the proposal for a direct Turkish steamer service to Hasa, and that it was not desirable that the Porte should strengthen or extend its influence on the Katif coast, unless we could clearly define the limits of its jurisdiction. He therefore suggested that the British India steamers should carry the Turkish mail bags between Basrah and Bahrain, and that the Turks should keep a mail officer at Ojair who would sail up to Bahrain once a fortnight with the mails.

Sir George Mackenzie, one of the Directors of the British India Company, who was consulted by the Foreign Office, was of opinion that as the approaches to Ojair had not been surveyed, navigation in those waters was dangerous, and that it would not be possible for mail steamers to proceed there. He suggested, however, that between Ojair and Bahrain the Turkish mails should be transported by *dhow* at the expense of the Turkish authorities. The question of establishing a subsidiary service between Bahrain and Ojair by means of a light draught vessel was in the meantime discussed by Sir A. U. Fanshawe, Director-General of Post Offices in India, with the Managing Agents of the Company, who stated that such a service could not be undertaken without the employment of a special steamer which would necessitate an increase in the subsidy of Rs. 12,000 per mensem.

The Government of India therefore favoured the proposal that the Turkish mails for Ojair should be made over to the British Post Office at Basrah and then be conveyed along with our own mails by fast steamer to Bushire, from where they would go by fortnightly subsidiary steamer to Bahrain, to be taken over by an Ottoman official who would make his own arrangements for forwarding them to Ojair. Major Cox was accordingly requested, in December 1905, to inform Consul Crow that these arrangements might be introduced as soon as found convenient by the Turkish authorities.

While these negotiations were proceeding, it was reported that the Vali of Basrah had arranged privately with Shaikh Mubarak for the carriage of the Turkish post overland to Hasa through Kuwait, and that the Shaikh had consented to the location of a Turkish postal official at Kuwait. The Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf was despatched to Kuwait to investigate the matter, and he reported that Shaikh Mubarak denied any intention of permitting a Turkish official to be placed at Kuwait. In the end it appeared that the Turkish postal authorities, through the medium of a Kuwait shop-keeper, had availed themselves of the hereditary runners who ply between Kuwait and Hasa as a private enterprise, for getting their mail bag through to Hasa.

In these circumstances and having regard to the fact that the Vali of Basrah had already been offered the services of the British Post Office, and that the Turks were sensitive regarding any question relating to Foreign Post Office in Turkish dominions, Mr. Crow considered it best to let things stand as they were until the Vali moved in the matter again. The Vali, Mukhils Pasha, who had fathered this project, having been subsequently removed from office, the matter was dropped.

Major Cox, writing on the 7th of April 1907, reported that it had recently been brought to his notice that letters destined for Hasa were being sent in sealed



mail bags in charge of an Arab courier by British India steamer from Basrah to Bahrain, and thence by native boat to Ojair and so to Nejd. He accordingly addressed the Political Agents at Kuwait and Bahrain with a view to ascertaining how this arrangement had come about. From answers received from these officers it appeared that the overland route *viâ* Kuwait had been definitely abandoned in favour of that *viâ* Bahrain, and it was presumed that this change had been brought about in consequence of Shaikh Mubarak's refusal to give the Turks a guarantee for the safety of the mails in his territory.

On the 21st April, Major Cox reported that it had been brought to the notice of the Political Agent at Bahrain that the Turkish mailbags containing correspondence between Katif and Basrah were being conveyed by British mail steamers to Bahrain more or less surreptitiously as passengers' private baggage and that a Turkish postal official had been established at the latter place. Major Cox remarked that the adoption of these arrangements, without reference to ourselves or to the ruling Shaikh whom we protect, could hardly be considered compatible with the canons of the postal union to which Turkey belongs or with the principles of international usage; but that as it would appear from a political point of view that these arrangements were to be preferred to the possible alternative of an inauguration of a Turkish steam-ship company it hardly seemed necessary to take any action in the matter.

The Government of India concurred in the opinion expressed by Major Cox, but considered it advisable that the Political Agent at Bahrain should be instructed to watch the proceedings of the Turkish postal agent and to report if he gave trouble or tried to usurp any status with regard to the Shaikh.

On the 24th June 1907, Major Cox telegraphed that having received information

#### Katif.

(1) *British Naval Officers insulted by Turkish officials.*

that the notorious pirate, Ahmed-bin-Selman, had encamped in the desert near Katif, he had arranged with the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf for the despatch of H. M. S. *Lapwing* to Katif to discuss with the Kaimmakam in a friendly manner what steps could be taken to check the pirate. The Commander and Lieutenant of the vessel landed on the 21st June to call on the Kaimmakam, but they were stopped at the gate of the town by the Turkish Port Officer and the Customs Officer who insolently told them that the Kaimmakam would not see them and that they had no right to land without permission from higher authorities. They furthermore refused to take any message to the Kaimmakam and hustled the two officers. The Commander considered that the Turkish officials were undoubtedly acting under the direct orders of the Kaimmakam who was believed to be in his house close by. Their attitude was so hostile that the naval officers returned. Major Cox suggested that, in view of the possibility of a complaint being made by the Turks at Constantinople, His Majesty's Ambassador there should be asked to take action in the matter at once.

The Government of India, in reporting the incident to the Secretary of State, pointed out that the freedom accorded to Turkish officers, soldiers and mails in the Bahrain Protectorate was in striking contrast to their treatment of our officers on this occasion, and they hoped that suitable notice would be taken by His Majesty's Government of the action of the Turkish officials.

On the 19th July, instructions were issued by His Majesty's Government to Sir N. O'Connor to draw the serious attention of the Ottoman Government to the discourtesy of the local officials whose action had practically amounted to sheltering the pirate. He was also to express the hope that immediate and categorical instructions would be issued with a view to the prevention of similar incidents in the future.

On the 19th August Sir N. O'Connor addressed a *note verbale* to the Sublime Porte in accordance with the instructions of His Majesty's Government.

On the 12th October 1907, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf pointed out that no steps appeared to have been authorized in the direction of obtaining any apology or reparation locally for the affront offered to the Commander of H. M. S. *Lapwing* by the Turkish authorities at Katif. He accordingly invited the

Government of India to consider the expediency of asking His Majesty's Government to induce the Porte to arrange for the accord of some overt local act of apology.

On the 13th November 1907, His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indies Station, stated that he entirely concurred in the recommendation of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and that he was addressing the Admiralty on the subject with a view to their Lordships supporting any representation the Indian Government might make. On the 2nd December 1907, the views of the Naval Commander-in-Chief were communicated by telegraph to the Secretary of State for India.

On the 3rd January 1908, the Secretary of State for India telegraphed to the Government of India that Sir N. O'Connor had been instructed by despatch to inform the Porte that the Katif incident would not be regarded as closed till a formal apology had been made by the offending officials to the Commander of H. M. S. *Lapwing* for the discourtesy shown to him. The despatch suggested the desirability of the Vali of Basrah being instructed by his Government to furnish an open letter to Lieutenant-Commander Gouldsmith, containing peremptory orders to the Katif officials to proceed on board H. M. S. *Lapwing* at an hour and date convenient to the officer in command, and tender a formal apology, both in writing and in person, for their previous misconduct. On the 21st January 1908, Sir N. O'Connor reported to Sir E. Grey that, as the result of his representations made to the Porte in August, the Vali of Basrah, while expressing his keen regret for what had occurred, had informed His Majesty's Consul at Basrah that there was no Kaimmakam at Katif at the time of the incident, the post being in charge of a certain Avni Effendi, whom he had removed. The Vali stated that from his enquiries it appeared that the captain of the port was chiefly to blame in the matter, and that he had been suspended for three months. On receipt of further instructions from the Minister of the Interior, the Vali had written officially to His Majesty's Consul at Basrah and informed him that instructions in writing had been sent to the present Kaimmakam of Katif to render a formal apology to the Commander of H. M. S. *Lapwing* on his next visit. The Minister of the Interior informed Sir N. O'Connor that his instructions were such that if His Majesty's Government thought it desirable, the Kaimmakam would make the apology to the Commander of any other of His Majesty's ships that might call at Katif in the meantime. In view of the possibility that H. M. S. *Lapwing* might not return to Katif for some time, and that if no apology were tendered until her return, the incident might by that time be so remote that the apology would not have due effect locally, Sir N. O'Connor was instructed to request that it should be made to the first British warship calling at that port. On the 14th March, the Naval Commander-in-Chief, East Indies Station, was requested by the Government of India by telegraph to order a ship to proceed to Katif for the purpose. It was suggested that her Commander might discuss the matter with the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf before taking action. The Political Resident was informed accordingly, and was requested to ascertain from the Consul at Basrah, before the ship started for Katif, whether clear instructions had been received by the Kaimmakam.

In June 1908, when H. M. S. *Lapwing* arrived at Katif, the Kaimmakam went on board and presented an apology in writing to the Commander for the discourtesy shown to him by the Turkish authorities at Katif when he visited that place, in June 1907, to discuss with the Kaimmakam the proceedings of the notorious pirate Ahmed-bin-Selman, who was said to be encamped in the neighbourhood. He also apologized verbally. The Commander returned the visit the next day, when he found all the officials very friendly and was offered every hospitality.

In August 1908, the First Assistant Resident, Bushire, telegraphed that Major Prideaux, the Political Agent, Bahrain, who had returned from a visit to Katif in the *Lapwing*, had reported that the Bedouins in the Katif oasis and neighbourhood had rebelled and attacked the town of Katif and the Shiah towns and villages of the oasis. A large number of people had been massacred and

most of the date-trees destroyed. The garrison of Anik and the village of Shaihat had been beleaguered for more than a fortnight, while attacks were made on Katif every night. The Turks were hard pressed, and, unless re-inforcements were speedily sent, the garrison would have to abandon the town population to massacre. Major Prideaux anticipated that the Kaimmakam would apply for the assistance of a British man-of-war, and enquired whether Government would approve of such assistance being rendered, and to what extent it should be given. He had received a memorial from the principal merchants of Bahrain pointing out that, in consequence of the closing of trade relations with Katif, they were being subjected to heavy losses from the ruin of the Katifs and the destruction of the property in the oasis.

The Government of India replied to the Political Resident that it was out of the question to lend assistance unless it was formally asked for by the Turkish authorities and informed the Secretary of State of the action taken. The latter telegraphed that, without the express sanction of His Majesty's Government, no assistance was to be given to the Turkish authorities.

On the 26th August, 320 Turkish troops and 2 guns left Basrah for Katif, and on the 18th September 1908, the Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division, reported that all was quiet at Katif. On the arrival there of the Turkish re-inforcements, a truce was established and a peace agreement subsequently signed by the Bedouins and Katifs. The civil official who accompanied the troops had, it was stated, suspended the Kaimmakam and arrested six of the principal Katif merchants including the customs farmer. The Turkish expeditionary force returned to Basrah on the 16th September 1908.

The notorious pirate Ahmed-bin-Selman appeared during the month of July 1906 off the Bahrain pearl banks and captured a Bahrain boat. The Senior Naval Officer despatched a gunboat to the scene, and the Consul at Basrah was requested by the Political Resident to report the matter to the local authorities and demand prompt measures for the apprehension and punishment of the outlaw. The Resident, however, did not anticipate useful action on the part of the Turkish officials unless strong pressure was brought to bear on them from Constantinople.

Ahmed-bin-Selman was reported to have made two piratical attacks in succession during the month of July.

In connection with these piratical raids, Major Cox, in company with Captain Prideaux, paid a visit to Al Bidaa on the coast of Katr. On arriving at their destination, Major Nimet Effendi, commanding the Turkish garrison at Al Bidaa, met them, and having asked the purpose of their visit, was informed that they had come to warn Shaikh Jasim and his sons of their obligation to suppress the pirate. Sir N. O'Connor, writing to Sir E. Grey on the 10th July 1906, mentioned that this incident had been reported by Major Nimet Effendi to the Commandant of Nejd who, in forwarding the report to the Ottoman Ministry of War, urged the desirability of punishing the persons arrested on account of Ahmed-bin-Selman's piracies, so as to afford no excuse for British interference.

It was reported that Ahmed-bin-Selman had since visited Doha. As the appearance of the pirate in Doha had caused a good deal of anxiety among the Bahrain pearlers, H. M. S. *Redbreast* was sent to cruise on the Katr pearl banks for a few days, and her presence there was said to have had a pacifying effect. Major Cox also addressed a friendly remonstrance to Shaikh Jasim-bin-Thani with reference to the fact that Ahmed-bin-Selman had been entertained by one of his relations, and that no attempt had been made to capture him.

On 21st September, His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople wrote to His Excellency the Viceroy that he had brought to the notice of the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs the recent acts of piracy committed by Ahmed-bin-Selman and had expressed the hope that the Captain of His Majesty's ship sent in pursuit of the pirate would be able to count on the co-operation of the Ottoman authorities in the Nejd in accomplishing his object.

On 21st August, Sir N. O'Connor reported to the Foreign Office that, in answer to the *note verbale* addressed by him to the Sublime Porte on the 19th September 1905, the latter had communicated to him a reply received from the Vali of Basrah to the effect that no complaints had been made to the local Turkish authorities by any one whatever in reference to the act of piracy attributed by the British Embassy to Ahmed-bin-Selman at Katif. The Vali suggested that, as Ahmed was a native of Bahrain, a cousin of the Shaikh of Bahrain, and domiciled and resident with his family at Bahrain, he might easily be captured if search were made for him by the authorities of Bahrain.

In June 1908, Major Cox telegraphed that the head Shaikh of the Albu and Kowara tribes inhabiting

(2) *Indebtedness of the head Shaikh of the Albu and Kowara tribes to residence of Bahrain.*

Fuwairat in Kat, who had become indebted to certain Bahrain merchants to the extent of two lakhs of rupees in connection with pearling operations, and was staying on parole in Bahrain pending a compromise with his creditors, had absconded with a large quantity of unsold pearls, which he was to have left in Bahrain as security, and had taken asylum in Katr. Owing to the possibility of an appeal to the Turkish authorities, it was found difficult to deal with him or his village effectively, and, as all friendly means of inducing him to return and meet his creditors had failed, Major Cox proposed that one of His Majesty's ships should arrest some of the boats of the tribe when on the pearl bank at sea and take them to Bahrain for detention in order to bring the debtor to terms. He added that if the Shaikh were allowed to evade justice with impunity, others would follow suit. Major Cox was requested by telegram to report whether the Shaikh of Bahrain had moved in the matter. It was added that it seemed doubtful whether action should be taken by the British authorities to recover private debts.

About the end of the month Major Prideaux, the Political Agent, Bahrain, proceeded in the Agency steam-launch to Fuwairat, Shaikh Nasir's home, and to Lusail to make an effort to induce the man to return to Bahrain under a safe conduct, provided that he brought back the pearls which he had carried away in his flight. He accordingly interviewed Shaikh Nasir on the 22nd May at Lusail. The man was obdurate in demanding that the mortgage creditors should restore all the deposits of pearls, which they held as partial security for their claims, in spite of the written authority which he had given them to sell in certain eventualities. Major Prideaux was unable to prevail on him to trust himself before the Bahrain Medjliss, though he had no reason for fearing that they would not treat him justly. Major Prideaux expressed the opinion that, if the Government were unprepared to put the same pressure upon the people of Katr as they did upon those of Bahrain through their ruler, a grave situation would arise owing to the extremely intimate commercial relations which existed between the two countries. If any weakness in regard to Shaikh Nasir was shown, Shaikh Abdulla-bin-Ja'im, the *de facto* Governor of Doha, would naturally also ignore any representations and the commercial situation, which was bad in Bahrain, would be rendered infinitely worse. In view of the foregoing explanation Major Prideaux stated that he would like to be authorized to proceed against the Albu-Kowara villages on shore, if necessary. If the Government were not prepared to run this risk, the temporary seizure of the tribe's boats on the pearl banks would have the effect of putting sufficient pressure to bear upon Nasir-bin-Shabin, and the authority of Shaikh Esa and the Political Resident would be satisfactorily vindicated. In forwarding the correspondence for the orders of the Government of India, the Political Resident suggested that it was advisable to decide whether they should interfere actively to settle such cases in future.

In July, Major Prideaux reported that Shaikh Nasir had returned to Bahrain under the pressure put upon him by the headmen of the other tribal villages. The Political Agent was hopeful that an arrangement would be arrived at without the necessity of recourse to active measures. The return of the Shaikh to Bahrain was due to the general knowledge that his case was being considered by the Government of India, and to the reports that it was intended to adopt forcible measures against the absconder and his tribe in the event of his continuing recalcitrant. Major Prideaux hoped that the Government of India would

accord their approval of the general principle regarding the desirability of active interference in Katr affairs of this nature whenever necessity arose in future. The Political Resident was informed in reply that it was considered preferable not to discuss the general question raised by the Political Agent. The expediency of active interference on the part of the Political Agent in Katr affairs depended on the circumstances of each case and on the political conditions existing at the time; and it was not considered desirable to lay down any general rule on the subject.

Major Trevor reported on the 10th October that some Akhtaris living near Kangoon, in Persia, headed by their (3) *Case of an alleged piracy at Fuwairat.* Nakhoda, appeared before the Political Agent at Bahrain and accused the Shaikh and the villagers of Fuwairat, on the Katr coast, of committing a piracy on their boat. They alleged that their boat, which was carrying a cargo of sheep and firewood consigned to Bahrain, was driven by a strong wind towards Fuwairat, where they were obliged to anchor at some distance off the coast. Some of the villagers came to the Persian boat and sailed it on to a reef. The boat struck on the reef and broke up. Thereupon some 20 of the villagers looted the Persian boat of a good many sheep and part of the firewood on board. The Persians had to sell off the rest of the cargo at a low price. The Nakhoda of the Persian boat asked the headman of Fuwairat to get the boat mended, but the Shaikh refused unless the Persians gave him a half-share in the boat. Major Trevor thought that it would be difficult to substantiate a charge of actual piracy against the Fuwairat people, but it appeared to him that they had behaved very badly on the whole. The Government of India instructed Major Trevor to send Captain Mackenzie to Fuwairat to make enquiries on the spot and to submit a full report.

Major Trevor reported on the 9th January 1910, that Captain Mackenzie had proceed to the spot and made such enquiries as were possible in the Fuwairat piracy case. The evidence obtained was conflicting, but it is not held to support a charge of piracy, and the case consequently resolved itself into one of making a harsh and unconscionable bargain with a shipwrecked crew for salvage and then not effecting the salvage properly. The total loss to the Persians was estimated at Rs. 2,000, but, acquitting the tribesmen of the charge of wrecking, Major Trevor recommended that they should be fined Rs. 1,000, the amount to be made over to the complainant, and that the tribesmen should also restore to the Persians the gear, etc., of the wrecked boat or make good its value, Rs. 650.

On the 14th February the Government of India telegraphed to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, supporting Major Trevor's proposals, and adding that no difficulty was anticipated in realizing the fine, for, in the event of tribesmen refusing to pay, some of their boats could be seized on the sea as soon as the pearling season begins next May.

His Majesty's Secretary of State for India has intimated that, as the charge of deliberate wrecking of the Persian boat has not been clearly established, and it was doubtful whether the penalties proposed could be enforced without action on shore, while the question of Turkish claims to the sovereignty over Katr peninsula, though not admitted by His Majesty's Government, had not yet been settled, His Majesty's Government considered it expedient to avoid intervention and to defer the proposed action until a better case was established. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf was accordingly informed on the 31st March.

On the 8th November 1905, Captain Prideaux, Political Agent at Bahrain, accompanied by his interpreter and an escort of one Naik and five riflemen went (4) *Katr affairs.* over to Katr to record the evidence of Shaikh Jasim-bin-Thani under a commission from the High Court of Bombay. He spent three days in the camp of Shaikh Jasim at Bu Hasa, and a day with the latter's brother, Shaikh Ahmed-bin-Thani at Bidaa.

Shaikh Jasim showed himself much interested in politics, but told Captain Prideaux that he had retired from all administrative work, and was, therefore, unable to help him in the matter for which he had come to Katr. At Bidaa,

Captain Prideaux was cordially received by Shaikh Ahmed, but the Turkish officials protested against his landing and objected to the presence of his escort of six sepoys. Shaikh Ahmed told Captain Prideaux that he was only one of the Medjliss that ruled his town. He promised, however, in regard to most of the cases brought to his notice, either to make the defendants settle with their creditors in course of one or two months or else to send them over to Bahrain or to drive them out elsewhere.

In the course of conversation, Shaikh Ahmed expressed his desire to enter into a treaty similar to the engagements subsisting between the Trucial Chiefs and the British Government, but said that with the Turks in their present position it would be impossible for him to do so.

Shortly afterwards news was received of the murder of Shaikh Ahmed bin Thani by a Beni Hajir Bedouin in his service in revenge for a punishment he had suffered at his hands. The Government of India reviewed the situation created in Katr by the death of Shaikh Ahmed and discussed the expediency of reviving the question of a protectorate treaty with the Chief of Bidaa. But as His Majesty's Government had decided that the whole question of the policy to be pursued in this region would have to be referred to the Defence Committee for examination, and as it was not likely that the death of Shaikh Ahmed would affect their decision, the Government of India, considered that it was not advisable to move in the matter. The Viceroy, however, approved of the instructions issued by the Political Resident to Captain Prideaux to keep himself closely informed of any changes in the position which might result from the death of Shaikh Ahmed and to maintain vigilance with regard to the alleged Turkish designs to establish a Mudir at Odeid.

Major Cox communicated to the Government of India, on the 16th September 1906, a request made to him by the Shaikh of Abu Thabi that he might be permitted to occupy Odeid on the coast of Katr, which had remained deserted since 1878. He was authorised to reply to the Shaikh that, while the Government of India were prepared to prevent the place being occupied by any other than himself, they were not disposed under present conditions to assist him in occupying it.

During Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty the struggle between the two great rival families of Central Arabia, viz., Ibn Rashid of Hail in northern Nejd and Ibn Saood, Wahabi of Riadh in southern Nejd—involving as it did the possibility of the absorption of Nejd by the Turks, and subsequent encroachments on Kuwait, led to the appointment in 1904 of a British Political Agent at Kuwait. Subsequently, owing to Turkish expeditions and threatened schemes of invasion against his country, Ibn Saood, Wahabi, supported by the Shaikh of Kuwait, made overtures to the Turks; with the result that in February 1905 it appears to have been arranged that Ibn Saud should retain his dominions in the south of Nejd in the capacity of a Turkish Governor; that Ibn Rashid should similarly remain in possession of northern Nejd and be restrained from interference in the south and that the Turks should pacifically occupy the district of Kasim in middle Nejd; between the two rival States. In 1905 this programme was carried into effect.

In October 1905, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf brought to the notice of the Government of India that Abdul Aziz Bin Saood, Wahabi, of southern Nejd had visited Katr and addressed letters to the Trucial Chiefs expressing his intention of visiting their territories in the following spring; and that the Chief of Abu Dhabi had conferred personally on the subject with the Sultan of Maskat, who was much agitated at the idea of the Amir of Nejd visiting Oman. His Highness considered that should Abdul Aziz make his appearance anywhere on the shores of Oman it would be the signal for a rising of all the Ghaferi tribes.

Reports from the local officers in the Persian Gulf seemed to point to the permanency of the recent reassertion by the Wahabi dynasty of its former position in Nejd. The cessation of hostilities there had left Bin Saood free to expand in other directions and the visit of Shaikh Zaid of Abu Thabi to Maskat showed that the situation was actually the cause of some anxiety to the Trucial Chiefs.

The Government of India, therefore, considered it very necessary that a course of action should be concerted at an early date in order to be prepared for developments. They directed Major Cox to ascertain from Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait the facts regarding Bin Saood's intention to visit the Pirate Coast and Oman. They also pointed out to His Majesty's Government how very serious to their prestige and influence would be the consequences if Bin Saood should attack the Pirate Coast Chiefs or the Sultan of Maskat, or succeed in extending his influence over them, and how important it was that such a contingency should be prevented especially in view of the acceptance by the Wahabi Amir of the suzerainty of the Sultan.

They urged the desirability of ascertaining whether Bin Saood was prepared to stand by the engagement of his predecessors not to oppose or injure British subjects residing in his territories and not to interfere with Arab tribes in alliance with the British Government. It was suggested that this enquiry should be made through the Shaikh of Kuwait or the Sultan of Maskat or other suitable channel, and that Bin Saood should be warned, in the event of his unwillingness to give the necessary assurances or to declare his intentions, that any attempt on his part to interfere in Oman, or along the Arab coast, or with the Chiefs and their subjects would be regarded as an unfriendly act, to frustrate which suitable measures would be taken.

Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait was told how matters stood and advised to discourage Bin Saood from the project of visiting Arab Coast and Oman, should he be consulted in the matter.

Shaikh Mubarak shortly afterwards informed Captain Knox that he had heard of Bin Saood's plans and regarded them as a mere attempt to extort money from the various coastal Chiefs; he had written already to Bin Saood, pointing out to him that it was impolitic for a ruler to confess to lack of funds, and further reminding him that Bin Rashid was only scotched, not killed, that Bin Saood's power in Nejd was by no means well established, and that the first fruits of any attempt at aggression would be that he himself would break off relations with him. Shaikh Mubarak did not believe that, after receipt of this letter, Bin Saood would persist in his design.

Major Cox considered that the spread of Wahabi influence required careful watching. Shaikh Zaid, Chief of Abu Thabi, at a confidential interview with Major Cox, expressed himself very strongly on this question. He is the leader of the Hinawi element in northern Oman and was himself instrumental in the final extinction of Wahabi influence from Beraimi and the Pirate Coast in 1870. It is natural therefore that he and his kinsman, the Shaikh of Debai, should regard the appearance of Bin Saood on the scene with much anxiety. On the other hand, the Ghafiri section of the Trucial Chiefs would regard Bin Saood's overtures with favour. Major Cox recommended that he might be authorised to warn the Trucial Shaikhs, both Ghafiri and Hinawi, that the Government of India would not view with complacency the intrigues of any of them with Bin Saood. He considered that general unrest prejudicial to our commercial interests on the coast would inevitably result from such intrigues. With the approval of the Secretary of State, Major Cox was authorised to convey the warning.

His Majesty's Government accepted the view that a warning to Bin Saood would be necessary if he carried out his reported intention of visiting the Pirate Coast and Oman. They considered however that it would be better to convey such warning only in the event of his actually appearing upon the coast, and that it should then be done direct by the British Government rather than through the Shaikh of Kuwait or the Sultan of Maskat. They proposed that, in the event of a warning being necessary, a warship should meet Bin Saood at one of the places along the coast, which he proposes to visit, and that he should be given clearly to understand that no tampering with the engagements and conventions of the Trucial Chiefs would be allowed.

The Political Resident announced in a telegram, dated the 25th April 1906, that the Shaikh of Kuwait had informed the Shaikh of Mohammerah that Ibn Rashid and his immediate following had been surprised and annihilated by Bin Saood.



When the news of the fighting reached Constantinople, the Sultan sent a telegram to Metaab, son of Ibn Rashid, expressing regret at the murder of his father and appointing him to take his father's place.

In September 1906, Major Cox acquainted the Government of India of the aspirations of Bin Saood to enter into closer relations with them, and in view of the situation created by the death of Abdul Aziz-bin-Rashid in April last and by the conclusion of peace between Bin Saood, Metaab-bin-Rashid and Shaikh Mubarak, recommended that the British Government should endeavour to establish friendly intercourse with Bin Saood.

In reply to a reference made by the Government of India to Major Cox as to the meaning of the frequent conferences between the Shaikh of Kuwait and the Shaikh of Mohammerah, he reported that the Arabs of Central Arabia, apparently driven to desperation by Turkish interference, seemed disposed to make common cause to throw off the Ottoman yoke, but that, realising that they were not strong enough to stand alone, they saw the necessity for enlisting the support of a Christian Power, and preferably that of the British Government if the latter were prepared to afford timely and effective assistance.

The Secretary of State telegraphed on the 9th November 1906 with reference to Major Cox's recommendations, that His Majesty's Government maintained the view that their interest and influence should be confined to the coast of Arabia. No steps were therefore to be taken, without the Secretary of State's previous sanction, to send agents into the interior or to enter into relations with Nejd. These instructions were communicated to Major Cox.

On 21st February 1907, the Government of India addressed the Secretary of State with reference to the overtures made by, and on behalf of, Abdul Aziz Bin Saood, the Wahabi Chief, with a view to the establishment of a closer connection between himself and the British Government. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf had desired to be in a position to give a definite answer to these overtures, and had recommended that the present opportunity might be taken to come to terms with the Wahabi Chief.

Proposals had been made on previous occasions for British intervention in the affairs of Nejd, but it had been decided on each occasion that it would be inexpedient to incur the difficulties and embarrassments involved. In pursuance of this policy His Majesty's Government desired, in December 1904, that it should be clearly understood that their interest and influence were to be confined strictly to the coast line of Eastern Arabia, and that nothing should be said or done to connect them even indirectly with warfare in progress in the interior. The Government of India had already issued the necessary orders to Major Cox to ensure strict adherence to the line of policy which had been laid down, but in the meanwhile they thought it their duty to point out that there were indications in the recent reports that the position of the Turks in Nejd was becoming increasingly difficult, and that they were unable to do more than maintain a mere semblance of power in Hasa where they had recently sustained a somewhat serious reverse at the hands of the local Arabs. In view of the rapid aggrandisement of Bin Saood as indicated by the recent reports, they called attention to the opinion expressed by Sir N. O'Connor in May 1904, that if Bin Saood succeeded in re-establishing a Wahabi dynasty throughout the centre of Arabia the result might render British influence and authority at Kuwait precarious. They also invited a perusal of their secret despatch, dated the 11th January 1906, in which they had shown that the growing importance of this Chief, if he were hostile to their interests, would be a danger to their relations with the Trucial Chiefs. If the Turks were really likely to disappear from the stage, and if Bin Saood was to be a power in the land, it seemed desirable that this Chief should, when a suitable moment arrived, be led to come to a friendly understanding with the British Government.

In the meanwhile, as some reply seemed to be necessary to the reiterated enquiries which had been made by, or on behalf of, Bin Saood, the Government of India proposed, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, to convey an answer to him to the effect that the British Government, while anxious to maintain friendly relations with him so long as he comported himself in a manner consonant with British interests and their engagements with Arab Shaikhs on the

coast, saw no necessity, under present conditions, for making him any formal promises of protection which might even have the effect of stimulating Turkish opposition to the consolidation of his authority.

The anxiety of the Government of India as to the possible effect of the changes in Nejd was heightened by the passage of considerable bodies of Turkish troops through Kuwait, a proceeding which was in contravention of the terms of the *status quo* Agreement of 1901 by which the Turks undertook not to send troops to Kuwait. The undertaking which the Porte had given related primarily to the offensive movement of troops by sea to Kuwait and did not contemplate such a situation as the present in which the Turks had withdrawn beaten troops by land through Kuwait. Still, if the occurrence were allowed to pass unnoticed, it would form an inconvenient precedent as tending to bring the Shaikh more directly under Turkish authority or even to facilitate a *coup de main* on Kuwait. If it were repeated and if the Shaikh resented it, there would be some danger that he might take direct measures to stop the passage of military parties through his territories, and this might at any moment lead to a disagreeable incident necessitating action on the part of the British Government which it would be desirable, if possible, to avoid. The Government of India, therefore, invited His Majesty's Government to consider whether the opportunity might not suitably be taken to warn the Turkish Government once more against taking action likely to "add still further to the disturbed condition of this part of Arabia," and to intimate to them that, if troops were again moved through Kuwait territory on their passage to or from Nejd, His Majesty's Government would be forced to consider what action should be taken to protect their own interests.

But His Majesty's Government saw no reason (May 3, 1907) to modify the policy already laid down by them, namely, that British interests and influence in the regions in question should be confined to the coast, and they agreed with Sir N. O'Connor, who had been consulted in the matter, that it would be unwise for them to entangle themselves with the Wahabi Amir, or in any other way to interfere in the internal affairs of Arabia. The terms of the reply which the Government of India proposed to return to Bin Saood appeared to His Majesty's Government to be open to objection as implying an approval of the consolidation of the Wahabi power, and consequently a certain interference in Arabian affairs. No such communication was, therefore, to be made, but if Major Cox found it impossible to avoid giving some answer to those who had approached him on the Wahabi Amir's behalf, he was to inform them that as Bin Saood's proposal involved considerations which His Majesty's Government could not entertain, no reply need be expected by them. With reference to the Government of India's proposal that representations should be made to the Porte regarding the passage of Turkish troops through Kuwait on their way back from the interior, Sir N. O'Connor, who had been consulted, was of opinion that a protest made so long after the event would only provoke ill-feeling without any corresponding advantages. In this view His Majesty's Government concurred.

On the 18th September 1907, the Government of India received a telegram from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, stating that the Shaikh of Kuwait had informed the Political Agent that he proposed to send a messenger to keep the peace between Bin Saood and Bin Rashid by guaranteeing the former in the possession of his territory, the latter in that of Hail, and the independence of El Kasim against both, and to persuade the Bedouins of both sides to abandon war. Major Knox had replied that he would report Shaikh Mubarak's proposals to Government, but reminded the Shaikh at the same time of the previous cautions given to him against his interference in the affairs of Central Arabia.

The Government of India replied that it was most important, if possible, to induce the Shaikh to postpone consideration of the policy proposed by him with regard to Bin Saood and Bin Rashid pending the conclusion of the foreshore negotiations. But that if the Shaikh pressed the matter, Major Knox, Political Agent, was to inform him that the question was a very important one and must be referred to the Government of India. In the meantime, he would only refer the Shaikh to the warnings previously given against interference in Nejd affairs. Major Knox was also to inform the Shaikh with regard to the proposal to guarantee the independence of El Kasim, that the Turkish claim to that district had not been abandoned.

In reporting the matter to the Secretary of State, the Government of India observed that, pending the conclusion of negotiations regarding the Kuwait foreshore, it was important to avoid the danger of irritating the Shaikh by any peremptory veto of the policy proposed by him. But if the Shaikh pressed for an immediate decision, they suggested that Major Knox should be instructed to inform him that the British Government had no wish to prevent him from using his influence with Bin Saood and Bin Rashid to prevent internecine warfare which threatened the prosperity of the Shaikh's own country and trade, but that his proposed guarantee would involve him in definite political action in Central Arabia and could not be allowed. The Government of India considered that the situation emphasised the desirability of obtaining from the Shaikh a formal recognition of their right to control his external relations.

On the 12th October, the Secretary of State telegraphed his approval of the instructions sent to the local officers in connection with the Shaikh of Kuwait's proposed interference in the affairs of Nejd, but stated that in the event of the Shaikh pressing for an immediate decision, the reply was to be confined to a warning against interference in the affairs of Nejd. It was considered advisable to postpone even this action until the agreement had been concluded for acquiring the foreshore site at Bandar Shweikh.

These instructions were communicated to the local officers. 7

On the 1st February 1908, Major Knox, the Political Agent at Kuwait, reported on the present situation in Nejd, with special reference to Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait's intervention in the feud between Bin Rashid and Bin Saood. It was stated that Shaikh Mubarak did intervene effectually and somewhat treacherously, through his Agent, Abdul Aziz-ul-Hassan, by detaching the Umtair tribe from Bin Rashid and generally by lulling their suspicions by false assurance of benevolent intervention, while at the same time he informed Bin Saood that it was a good opportunity to attack his enemies. Major Knox was of opinion that Shaikh Mubarak was behind the scenes throughout, that he encouraged the Bin Rashid faction to make head against Bin Saood with a view to showing the latter Chieftain that he was not strong enough to stand alone and was still in need of Mubarak's assistance, and that when he saw that matters had gone far enough and that Bin Saood had learnt his lesson, he shamelessly deceived Bin Rashid and his friends and delivered them to Bin Saood. Major Knox was further of opinion that Shaikh Mubarak would continue to interfere in Nejd politics as an intriguer, though he did not think that there was any reason to fear a repetition of an expedition from Kuwait after the Sarif disaster. The pretensions of Shaikh Mubarak to act as keeper of the peace between Bin Rashid and Bin Saood should not, in the Political Agent's opinion, be treated too seriously. News from Nejd was reported to be very scanty, and Major Knox had heard nothing that would lead him to anticipate at present any further disturbance of the peace.

In March 1907, Major Cox reported that Shaikh Mubarak had imprisoned some Ajman Bedouins and had warned the Ajman tribe generally that he expected them to restore within ten days twenty heads of cattle which had been stolen in the middle of February from Kuwait Bedouins. He threatened that if they failed to comply, he would make war upon them.

On the 4th June, the Secretary of State telegraphed that in view of a report from Mr. Consul Crow at Basrah regarding the actions contemplated by Shaikh Mubarak against the Ajman tribe, His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople had suggested that influence should be exercised to prevent military operations being undertaken by the Shaikh against the tribe, save in self-defence.

On the 21st June, the Government of India replied that the Consul's report dealt with the early history of the case only and that according to the latest information, Shaikh Mubarak had only arranged to make reprisals on the Ajman near Kuwait for the theft of 20 heads of Kuwait cattle, and that his threat had been sufficient to induce the tribe to come to terms. In the circumstances the Government of India remarked that they would prefer not to issue a further warning at present to the Shaikh against mixing himself up with the tribes of the interior, as this might tend to weaken their influence over him. This view was accepted by the Secretary of State.

About a year later, in July 1908, it was reported from a trustworthy source that the Sebhan clan of the Shammar tribe of northern Nejd, under the leadership of one Hamoud-ibn-Sebhan, had attacked and taken Hail from its Ibn-Rashid ruler, who was deposed and imprisoned. Hail and the Shammar tribe thus passed under the rule of Hamoud-ibn-Sebhan.

During the following year raids and counter-raids were carried on between the two rival families of Nejd; and reports in May 1909 and subsequently were to the effect that Bin Saood, Wahabi of Riyadh, had lost influence and prestige in Central Arabia and that Wahabism had received a set-back.

#### PERSONNEL.

*(Vide Appendix I.)*

## CHAPTER III.

## SEISTAN AND KHORASAN.

The policy pursued by the Indian Government in the Seistan region during the years preceding Lord Minto's arrival was in the words of the Summary of that period one of "constant and unpretentious activity in fostering the trade routes, and of steadily asserting British authority up to the borders of Seistan and British influence within it." But the prosecution of this policy led unfortunately to unconcealed annoyance on the part of Russia, who diligently pursued a policy of counter-measures and intrigue; with the result that the history of the period in those parts is one unbroken record of ceaseless rivalry between Great Britain and Russia. In connection, however, with the Viceroyalty that has followed, there is hardly anything to notice that savours of studied rivalry between the two Powers; traces of the conflict are to be found here and there in the isolated acts of individuals, but the struggle as an organized whole seems to have died almost completely away. Steps for the consolidation of British interests in this quarter during the period under review therefore proceeded on very quiet lines, and there are few stirring or important events to record.

The most important measure to notice was probably the agreement effected between Great Britain and Russia, whereby the former handed over control over the Tehran-Meshed telegraph line in exchange for the cession to her by Russia of control over the Khaf-Nasratabad section of the Meshed-Seistan line. But this matter has been already dealt with in Chapter I.

We may next pass to matters in connection with the outbreak of plague in Seistan.

Early in January 1905, Mr. Grant-Duff telegraphed to Captain Macpherson

Outbreak of plague in Seistan. Disturbances in connection with measures taken for its suppression.

that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires had informed the Tehran Sanitary Council of a disease in the Naizar (reed-lands) in Seistan which the Russian Consular doctor pro-

nounced to be plague. Captain Macpherson at once sent Hospital Assistant Shaikh Ahmed to investigate, and he reported the disease to be true bubonic plague of a virulent type. This diagnosis was subsequently confirmed by the Director-in-Chief of the Plague Research Laboratory at Bombay to whom Captain Macpherson sent specimens of the blood of suspected plague patients for examination.

His Majesty's Government were informed of the outbreak and of the views of the Government of India which were to the effect that endeavours should be made to keep the control of affairs in the hands of the Persian or British Governments, but that if Russia insisted on establishing a military cordon we should at least send up man for man: it was further proposed, in order to be prepared for eventualities, to despatch at once to the frontier the double company of Indian infantry held in readiness as escort to the reserve of arms and ammunition for the Meshed and Seistan consulates (see under that head).

Arrangements were made to render medical assistance by the despatch to Seistan of a British medical officer (Captain Kelly, I.M.S.), and another hospital assistant, and for the supply by post of a quantity of plague serum and appliances for inoculation. The British hospital assistant at Birjand was moved to Bandan to supervise the quarantine post established there, and the services of Dr. Clemenger of the Indo-European Telegraph Company were secured for a similar post at Nasratabad Ispe. The Agent to the Governor-General, Baluchistan, was instructed to establish an observation post at Koh-i-Malik Siah against arrivals from Seistan for which purpose the hospital assistant at Saindak was despatched to Koh-i-Malik Siah; and two additional hospital assistants sent from India for duty on the Seistan trade route where observation stations were established at Saindak, Chagai, Mashki-chah and Nushki for the inspection of travellers from infected areas, and detention of suspicious cases and contacts with disinfection of clothes. His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan was also warned of the outbreak and asked to instruct his frontier officers to protect the Afghan frontier, and to co-operate with the British officials in Seistan in stamping out the disease.

In January 1906, under instructions from the Grand Vizier, a meeting was convened of the British and Russian consuls, customs officials and doctors, which has since been known as the Seistan Sanitary Council, and a sub-committee was formed in accordance with whose advice all precautionary measures were to have been taken, but the direction of affairs was subsequently transferred to the Director of Customs. From the commencement, the operations of the Sanitary Council were hampered by the opposition shown by the Mullas and Saiyids, who were not represented on the council, and by the endeavours of the Russians to profit politically by the situation. Captain Macpherson accordingly recommended that the Persian Government should be advised that the British Government, having full confidence in the ability of the Director of Customs and the Persian frontier officers to suppress the plague and to prevent its spread to British territory, propose the dissolution of the Seistan Sanitary Council, and the grant of full powers to those Persian officials, with the liberty to consult, on purely medical questions the British and Russian doctors ; or, as a last resort, that the removal of the Russian doctor from the council should be pressed for on the ground of his persistent efforts to gain political advantage from his position.

His Majesty's Government to whom Captain Macpherson's proposal was referred in February 1906 by Mr. Grant-Duff, were of opinion that it was doubtful whether the consent of the Tehran Sanitary Council, or the Persian or Russian Governments could be obtained to the removal of the Russian doctor or the dissolution of the Seistan Sanitary Council ; that it was desirable to avoid friction ; and that Russian intrigue in Seistan should be met locally. If, however, pronounced action became necessary, the attention of the Russian Government would be called to the matter, provided that adequate proof of the existence of intrigues was available.

Captain Kelly arrived at Nasratabad on the 15th March and in consultation with him, Captain Macpherson telegraphed his proposals to secure an adequate distribution of medical assistance to meet the change in situation owing to the increase of plague. He said that plague was well established in the city of Nasratabad, and its extension to the whole of Seistan, and eventually to Afghanistan, was inevitable ; that there was ample justification for a cordon at Birjand and for precautionary measures on the Afghanistan-Kain frontier ; and that, if we did not offer medical assistance, the Russians would probably extend their Turbat cordon to that frontier, and establish another cordon at Birjand for which place, it was reported, a Russian doctor had already started.

Captain Macpherson's proposals involved an increase to the medical establishment already in Seistan of 1 European doctor, 7 hospital assistants and 2 compounders. Orders were given for the despatch to Seistan of 4 additional hospital assistants and one compounder, but the question of medical assistance for the Afghanistan-Kain frontier, for which the balance of the additional establishment asked for was required, was reserved pending a reference to Mr Grant-Duff on the subject of the cordon which the Shaukat-ul-Mulk was said to have established and to organize and control which it was believed that a Russian doctor was now on his way to Birjand. The Government of India informed Mr. Grant-Duff that they considered that, as the frontier from Hashtadan to Siah Koh Bandan was not demarcated and disputes with Afghanistan were, in the circumstances, likely, the British Government should, under Article 6 of the Treaty of Paris, 1857, claim the right to be consulted before a cordon was established, and if the cordon was held to be necessary, acquire the right to control it, owing to the frontier questions involved.

On the morning of the 27th March 1906 a serious riot directed against plague measures occurred at Nasratabad, and the mob, after burning the temporary shelters erected by the Customs authorities for the accommodation of plague patients, entered and wrecked the dispensary of the British Consulate. They also threw clods of earth at the British Consular staff, and Captains Macpherson and Kelly and some subordinates were struck. The immediate cause of the outbreak was said to be an attempt by a Customs official (who was beaten by the mob) to enforce the compulsory removal of a plague patient to hospital.

Captain Macpherson telegraphed for assistance to the Baluchistan frontier post of Robat, and Mr. Hughes, the Assistant District Superintendent of Police, Chagai, started at once for Seistan with 23 levy sowars.

On the 28th March, as the excitement continued, the British Consulate was reinforced by all the Afghans in the city, but there were no further disturbances. On the 30th March a large crowd came to the city from Bunjar and threatened an attack unless certain demands they made were granted. The Deputy Governor induced the crowd to disperse, but owing to the excited state of the populace he was afraid to make any arrests; and Captain Macpherson agreed to wait for the arrest and punishment of the ringleaders of the attack on the Consulate dispensary for a little while by which time his own position would be strengthened by the arrival of Mr. Hughes with reinforcements.

On receipt of the news from Seistan, Mr. Grant-Duff at once saw the Mushir-ud-Dowleh, who telegraphed to the Governor-General of Khorasan and the Seistan authorities to protect the British Consulate; while the Government of India ordered the double company of infantry on its way to Robat (already referred to above) to be pushed on as quickly as possible.

Disturbances, however, were not renewed and by the 2nd April 1906 the situation had sufficiently quieted down to permit of the shops in the city, which had been closed during the excitement, being re-opened. Mr. Hughes with his levies reached the British Consulate on the 2nd April without opposition, and was instructed to remain there until further orders.

The double company of infantry reached Robat on the 15th April, but owing to the improvement in the situation they were stopped at that place with orders not to cross the frontier except in case of extreme urgency, of which the Consul, Seistan, was to be the judge.

Information was now received that the Russian doctor, who was stated to have started for Birjand, had arrived there; and he was reported to have been given consular powers and placed in charge of all quarantine arrangements between Birjand and Turbat-i-Haidari, where he had established about nine posts. It was accordingly decided that Captain Watson, I.M.S., from the British Consulate at Turbat-i-Haidari, should also proceed there, and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran arranged with the Persian Government that Captain Watson should have in all respects a similar position to the Russian doctor. It was reported at this time that the Russian doctor was urging the Shaukat-ul-Mulk to establish a cordon on the undemarcated portion of the Afghan-Kain frontier.

Lieutenant Keyes, the British Consul at Turbat, had previously, when on his way to that place, reported that the situation there was critical, and that very little might lead to an attack, by Afghans on Russians, or Belgium Customs or Quarantine officials, which would have disastrous results. Hence it was suggested to His Majesty's Government that some representation to the Persian Government might be made before the cordon was established. But His Majesty's Minister reported that the Mushir-ud-Dowleh knew nothing of the establishment of a Persian or other cordon in those parts; and that the Russian Minister had informed him in writing that the alleged establishment of a Russian cordon was untrue.

About midnight on the 10th July a gang of about ten men armed with sticks broke into the grounds of the British Consulate by scaling the walls, and beat some of the Consulate employes, and the Government of India informed (July 18th) the Home Government that they considered this affair in a town excited by plague riots to be serious, and that in addition to a demand for an apology from the Persian Government and the punishment of the persons concerned, it was necessary to increase the British Consulate to the strength of the Russian escort (30 men), and to place an adequate reserve of arms and ammunition in the Consulate, such as the Russians possessed, for which purpose the reserve at Robat should be sent to Seistan under a suitable escort from the double company of native infantry there, which would be withdrawn, when the Persian troops arrived and showed that they were intended to maintain order and were able to do so.

His Majesty's Government agreed to the Consulate escort being increased, but considered that the party of Robat levies which had reinforced the Consulate after the disturbances of March should be withdrawn if, and when, reinforcements arrived and the Persian Government were again in a position to main



tain security, as otherwise their presence there might serve as an excuse for a corresponding increase in the Russian escort. They also agreed to the reserve of arms and ammunition being sent to Nasratabad, but suggested that in order to avoid attracting attention an escort of levies should be employed together with the 10 regular soldiers required to complete the Seistan escort.

The entire reserve of arms and ammunition for the Meshed and Seistan Consulates left Robat on the night of the 14th August, reached the Seistan Consulate safely on the morning of the 19th idem. Ten men of the double company were retained by the Consul as a temporary addition to his guard, pending the arrival of the 10 sowars who were being sent to raise the strength of the Consular guard to 30.

On the 27th August, it was reported that only three deaths from plague had occurred during the month, and that Seistan was entirely free from plague. Measures had been taken against rats, and disinfection had been carried out. The Consul, Seistan, accordingly recommended the withdrawal from Birjand of the Russian and British doctors, the modification of the Bandan quarantine to a simple observation post, and the retention of the observation post at Birjand under Persian doctors.

On the 15th September Captain Watson reported from Birjand that the Karguzar had informed him that the Bandan quarantine had been closed and that it would not even be used as an observation post. Seeing that it is nearer to Seistan than Birjand and that it is the only purely British quarantine in Eastern Persia, he thought it a great pity, and considered that the Birjand quarantine could with advantage have been abolished first and Bandan retained as an observation post. A line from Duroh through Bandan to Neh would, in the event of plague breaking out again, stop all travellers from Seistan and so render the Birjand quarantine unnecessary.

Subsequently the Tehran Sanitary Council decided to maintain quarantine until the end of the year. Quarantine at Birjand has closed on the 22nd March 1907.

As a compliment to the new Shah His Britannic Majesty's Government agreed to waive their original demand for the deportation of the ringleaders of the riots, in view of the opinion expressed by the Consul, in which Sir C. Spring-Rice, His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, concurred that it would excite much ill-feeling so long after the event and also irritate the Russians, who had business dealings with the persons in question; and after much delay Major Kennion, Consul for Seistan, received a public apology, a sum of £100 as compensation, and land to the extent of 9,145 zars.

In April 1907, the Agent to the Governor-General in Baluchistan was instructed to withdraw the plague inspection posts on the trade route, but to leave a hospital assistant at Koh-i-Malik Siah until such time as the Persian Government could dispense with his services. In May, however, Seistan was officially declared by the Seistan authorities to be finally free of plague and, with the concurrence of His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran, orders were issued for the dispersal of the plague establishment serving in Seistan.

In September 1906, just when plague had disappeared from Seistan, anthrax appeared in epidemic form, and caused considerable loss of life amongst live-stock. Enquiries were instituted with a view to taking special precautions against the spread of the disease to Baluchistan, but as it was ascertained that the disease was endemic in Seistan and that there was no evidence that it had ever been imported into India by the Seistan trade route, no prohibition of trade with Seistan was considered to be necessary. Anthrax appeared again in Seistan in 1907.

In May 1907, the Government of India, in reporting the suspension of plague operations in Seistan, asked His Majesty's Medical officer for the Seistan Consulate. Government to sanction the permanent appointment of a British medical officer for the Seistan Consulate, the necessity for which had been demonstrated by the recent outbreaks of plague and anthrax, and by the increase of British influence consequent on the operations of the medical officer who had been attached to the Consulate in 1906 on the outbreak

of plague. British influence would inevitably diminish if Seistan were left with a Russian doctor, and the British doctor were to be withdrawn.

His Majesty's Government, though not prepared at the time to consider the question of the permanent appointment, sanctioned, as a purely temporary arrangement, the continuance of the existing appointment of plague medical officer.

On the suspension of plague operations in Seistan, His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran, in April 1907, raised the question of the future quarantine arrangements on the eastern frontier of Persia. He mentioned the advantages gained by the Russians from the sanitary cordon established in Khorasan by them in 1907, and he suggested that the British Government should make suitable arrangements with the combined object of preventing foreign interference on the Afghan frontier and securing an efficient sanitary service in view of the danger of infection from India overland, which, as had been acknowledged by the British authorities, had been, on several occasions, the path followed by epidemics of plague and cholera.

The Government of India fully agreed with His Britannic Majesty's Minister that, if such quarantine arrangements were necessitated, they should be in the hands of British medical officers. In July, His Majesty's Government were informed that plague had broken out in a severe form at Basawal in Afghanistan, and would probably appear at Kabul; in all probability as soon as authentic news of the outbreak reached the Russian authorities, they would initiate still more vigorous quarantine measures along the Perso-Afghan frontier. In the opinion of the Government of India, it was, therefore, additionally desirable to arrange, if possible, with the Russians for the transfer to our charge of all quarantine measures south of Zulficar, at the earliest convenient date. If such negotiations were deferred until plague became a serious danger to their dominions, the Russians would certainly refuse to entertain the idea, and their quarantine posts along the Perso-Afghan frontier would probably become, not only more numerous, but permanent. This would seriously prejudice the retention of Seistan and the greater part of Kain within the sphere of British influence, in the manner proposed under the draft Agreement which was then being negotiated with Russia. It was suggested that if His Majesty's Government agreed, an assurance should be given to the effect that the Government of India would be prepared to entertain a preventive establishment of efficiency equal to that now entertained by the Russians, namely, three medical officers of a superior stamp, to be stationed respectively at Turbat, Birjand, and Karez, and an executive officer (whose functions would be similar to those of the present Russian Cossack officer at Karez) for the supervision of the Persian officers and sowars of the quarantine cordon.

His Majesty's Government were reminded that the Russian fear of plague was so great that they had actually proposed, in August 1905, to establish an inspecting officer of their own at Rawalpindi. Major Sykes had already drawn particular attention to this aspect of the question, and every circumstance seemed, therefore, to indicate the urgent necessity of coming to an early understanding with the Russian Government on the subject of quarantine measures, before they were rendered impracticable by panic. It was pointed out that under the Convention then being negotiated the Government of India could probably not object to the Russians imposing another quarantine cordon north of the Zulficar-Meshed line; and, with a double cordon there, apprehensions as to the spread of plague ought to be allayed. No reply has yet been received to this reference.

In connection with the plague operations in Seistan described in the foregoing pages, mention was made of a reserve of arms and ammunition for the Meshed and Seistan Consulates. This reference will now be explained.

Towards the end of Lord Curzon's term of office, proposals were made by the British Consul-General at Meshed and the British Consul at Seistan for the supply of arms and ammunition for their consulates for defensive purposes in the event of an attack by rioters; a contingency which is always possible in a fanatical Muhammadan country like Persia. The Russian Consulates at both places had already

laid in a stock of arms and ammunition. In July 1905, Sir A. Hardinge was asked to obtain the consent of the Persian Government to the importation of the arms and ammunition for the British Consulates. In November the Persian Government informed Mr. Grant-Duff, His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, that they were negotiating with the Russians for the removal of the arms which the latter had imported; that to sanction the request of the British Government would defeat the object of these negotiations; and that they hoped the matter would not be pressed. It was considered very unlikely that the Russians would agree to the removal of the arms they had imported, and in view of the unsatisfactory state of the internal condition of Persia at the time, His Majesty's Government were asked to sanction the despatch, under a suitable escort, of a reserve of arms and ammunition to Robat on the Perso-Baluch border to be ready for despatch to the consulates in case of an emergency arising.

In January 1906, His Majesty's Government agreed to this step being taken, provided it was carried out in such a manner as not to awaken the suspicion of the Persian Government. They were informed that it would not be possible to send the escort to Robat without the circumstances coming to the knowledge of the Persian Government, and that if there were any risk of disturbances in Persia, as to which the Tehran Legation had no doubt informed His Majesty's Government, the arms should be despatched, and, if necessary, the Persian Government informed that in view of possible disturbances the step was being taken as a measure of precaution to protect British interests within the British border, and to prevent the danger of the disturbances spreading.

The desirability of taking the step was shortly afterwards again brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government in connection with the outbreak of plague in Seistan, and at the end of January they sanctioned the despatch to Robat of the reserve of arms and ammunition and its escort, the strength of which had been fixed at a double company of Native Infantry under two British officers. The party left Quetta early in March, the delay being due to transport and supply difficulties on the Nushki trade route. In February Mr. Grant-Duff informed the Mushir-ed-Dowleh, the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the detachment was being sent to Robat as a precautionary measure in view of the outbreak of plague in Seistan, and in order to render assistance to the Persian Government if required.

Nothing further was done till the 14th August 1906, when the reserve of arms and ammunition was despatched under an escort from Robat for Seistan, where it arrived on the 19th idem. The entry into Seistan of the arms and ammunition was opposed by the Persian customs employes at Koh-i-Malik Siah, but the consignment was passed through without much trouble owing to the tact of the British Consular Agent at that place. The Director of Customs in Seistan asked the Consul by what authority an armed force had entered Persia and what they brought. Under instructions from His Majesty's Legation at Tehran he was referred to the Persian Government, who subsequently made representations on the subject both at London and at Tehran, alleging that the customs at Koh-i-Malik Siah had been forced and the officials maltreated. This report was officially denied by His Majesty's Government.

In November 1906, in compliance with a telegraphic request from the Consul-General at Meshed, the Meshed portion of the reserve was despatched secretly by the Consul, Seistan, and reached its destination safely in December. Major Kennion, when called upon to explain his action, stated that his reason for ordering up the reserve was the probability of election riots at Meshed and disturbances in the event of the Shah's death. The Government of India, however, held that his action was unauthorized, and that he should have referred first for instructions to them or His Britannic Majesty's Legation at Tehran, in which case it was probable that he would have been directed to import the arms, if at all, openly rather than in the secret manner adopted.

His Majesty's Government, to whom the affair was reported, said in a despatch, dated the 8th February 1907, that owing to the persistent refusal of the Persian Government to permit the importation of the arms, and of the protest made by them when the arms were introduced under escort into Seistan, they

considered that the Consul in Seistan, who arranged for the secret despatch of the arms, followed the best course open to him in the difficult circumstances; but as it was obviously undesirable that British officers should be under the necessity of resorting to contraband practices, they hoped that on future occasions it would be possible to get the consent of the Persian Government to the importation of such arms as might be necessary for the safety of His Majesty's Consulates.

In July 1907 the Government of India accorded sanction to certain works proposed by His Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed for the improvement of the defences of the Consulate-General; and arrangements were subsequently made for the supply from the Quetta arsenal of certain explosives, tools and materials, required for the defence of the Consulate-General in case of an attack.

The double-company of Indian Infantry which had escorted from India the reserve of arms and ammunition sent up for the Meshed and Seistan Consulates, was subsequently retained at Robat in consequence of plague disturbances in Seistan, and the measures for the prevention of gun-running. Owing to the unhealthiness of the outpost, however, it was withdrawn in July 1909.

In April 1905, Colonel McMahon, the British Arbitration Commissioner, delivered to the Afghan and Persian Commissioners his award regarding the distribution of the waters of the Helmund river in Seistan. In May 1905, His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan cordially accepted the award with the single exception of the fifth clause which provided for the appointment of a British irrigation officer, for the purpose of settling water disputes, which His Highness did not consider necessary if the border officials were provided with good maps. In August 1905, owing to a water dispute between Persians and Afghans, which was fortunately quickly settled by Lieutenant Keyes, Vice-Consul, Seistan, Sir A. Hardinge was asked to press the Persian Government to give their adherence to the award at an early date to prevent such disputes. Owing to the absence of the Shah in Europe, and to Russian influence, nothing definite could be got out of the Persian Government until the case was forced to the front just about the time of Lord Minto's arrival in India, in November 1905, by a communication from His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan who forwarded a letter which the Afghan Brigadier commanding at Farrah had received from the Persian frontier official to the effect that as Persia had refused to accept Colonel McMahon's award it was inoperative and that Persia adhered to the *status quo ante* and the original Goldsmid award.

The matter was reported to His Majesty's Government, with whom, under the terms of arbitration, the final decision lay, and they instructed Mr. Grant-Duff to enquire from the Persian Government if the communication sent to Farrah was made under their orders; and, if so, to request its withdrawal. Mr. Grant-Duff was also told to inform the Persian Government that as they had asked for arbitration, they could not revert to the *status quo*; but that, if after discussion with His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, they were still dissatisfied, they must appeal against the award to His Majesty's Government, who, while fully prepared to consider Persian representations before giving a decision, could not allow the Persian Government, as one of the parties to arbitration, to notify the other party their intention of disregarding the award, and that unless the Persian Government appealed within a reasonable period, His Majesty's Government would consider the award as final and would take effective steps to render it operative.

The Persian Government did not lodge a formal appeal, but early in March 1910 they informed Mr. Grant-Duff that they considered the award prejudicial to their interests, and, for the following reasons, asked for an amendment of it:—

- “(1) Arbitrator has not kept to the Goldsmid award, but has only adopted the interpretation by the British Foreign Office of that award. The Afghans are allowed to open up old canals and construct new ones, while the Persians are deprived of this right, because the canals lie in Afghan territory, and, therefore, a large extent of Persian soil will be left uncultivated.
- (2) Although the Arbitrator was aware that the Persians possess over 500,000 acres of arable land, the share of water given only irrigates 200,000 acres, Persia claims  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the water instead of  $\frac{1}{3}$ , as stated in the award, their cultivated lands being double the extent of those held by Afghanistan.

- (3) The Afghans will be able to cultivate their lands and the Persian peasants will emigrate to Afghan territory.
- (4) The restrictions relating to the alienation of the water of a third party should be equally applied to the Afghans. The restriction applied to Persia alone is against her consent. The Goldsmid award contains no reference to such restriction.
- (5) The appointment of a permanent water engineer would have been unnecessary if judgment had been given in accordance with Goldsmid's award."

This representation was under consideration by His Majesty's Government at the close of the period of this Summary.

In February 1907, His Britannic Majesty's Consul reported that the local authorities had obtained permission from Tehran to construct a road from Seistan to Koh-i-Malik Siah by forced labour. As such permission would merely afford the local officials an opportunity to squeeze money out of the people, without any likelihood of the road being constructed, it would render us unpopular with no corresponding advantage. Major Kennion, therefore, suggested that the Persian Government should be asked to permit us to take the work in hand ourselves.

Sir C. Spring-Rice addressed the Persian Government on the subject, but though the road was put in hand by the local officials it was eventually dropped on a protest being made by the leading *mullas* to Tehran.

In October 1907, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran, at the request of His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Seistan, approached the Persian Government with a view to certain improvements being made by the British authorities on the Palang Koh route which would greatly benefit caravans proceeding from Koh-i-Malik Siah to Birjand or Meshed, and *vice versa*, as they could then avoid the present detour to Seistan and the crossing of the *Hamun*. The Persian Government denied the necessity for the improvements, and stated that the road in question would if necessary, be put in order at the expense of the Persian Government on the recommendation of the local authorities: and although the Karguzar, at Major Kennion's request, subsequently recommended certain improvements to the Koh-i-Malik Siah-Seistan and the Palang Koh routes, he was unable to get the necessary sanction from Tehran.

On the 3rd March 1909, His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran reported

Attempt of one Edward Kitabji to secure a concession for a road from Seistan to Koh-i-Malik Siah.

that an individual of doubtful antecedents, named Edward Kitabji, was seeking a concession at Tehran for a road from Seistan to Koh-i-Malik Siah on the Perso-

Baluch frontier. Kitabji, who did not apparently represent any group in England, said that he was about to become a British subject and that he would form an English company to work the concession. The Government of India, however, considered that Kitabji's application should be regarded with suspicion. A genuine company would never be benefitted by the concession which could, however, be used to subvert British influence, hamper British trade, and obtain rights amounting to domination over Seistan landholders, through whose land would run the only portion of the road which required construction and by whose labour it would, if ever constructed, be made. Further, trade on this route could not bear road dues in addition to the existing heavy freightage charges. The Government of India were of opinion that, both on political and strategical grounds, as well as in the interests of trade, an attempt should be made to frustrate the application; but nothing further has been heard from His Majesty's Government, as to what action was taken in the matter.

In May 1906, Captain Macpherson was authorised by His Majesty's Legation at Tehran to address the Director of

Employment of Russian Agents on the postal line between Seistan and Koh-i-Malik Siah.

Customs in Seistan regarding the employment on postal work between Seistan and Koh-i-Malik Siah, by the Customs Department,

of one Pasand Khan and his sowars who were well known to be Russian agents. Captain Macpherson had previously pointed out to M. Molitor the

objections to the employment of these men, and the latter promised to replace them but left Seistan without doing so.

M. Cattersel, who had replaced M. Molitor as Director of Customs in Seistan, stated that the postal arrangements had been transferred to an independent subject, but Captain Macpherson had reason to believe that two of the new man's sons were employed in the Russian Consulate, while the man himself was a nominee of Pasand Khan to whose tribe he belonged. The change was, therefore, no improvement and Captain Macpherson informed M. Cattersel that the new arrangement could not be accepted, and suggested that, if an independent subject could not be found, the postal contract should be given to one of the British postal sowars. M. Cattersel finding himself in a dilemma between British and Russian interests in the matter referred the case to Tehran. Nothing further has been heard on the subject.

In August 1907 information was received that a party of sowars of the Meshed escort, returning to India on relief, had been assaulted by Customs employés at the Lab-i-Baring *serai*; and that shortly afterwards a party of men employed by Pasand Khan, a notorious Russian Agent whose employment on the Seistan-Koh-i-Malik Siah postal line had been ineffectually opposed by us in 1906 had delayed the sowars at the edge of the *Hamun* for several hours by preventing the boatmen, under threats of punishment from the customs authorities, from ferrying the party across the lake until orders were received from the Karguzar of Seistan.

The assault was not of a serious nature, but as on previous occasions British subjects had been treated with incivility at Lab-i-Baring, and as the Customs Department brought a counter-charge against the sowars of having wounded their employés with lances, which was, however, easily disproved, His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Seistan, took up the matter; and in September, a promise was obtained from the Persian Government that Mr. Duhem, the Director of Customs in Seistan, would be removed for his action in the case. Mr. Duhem left Seistan in October.

Subsequently Major Kennion ascertained that the contract for the postal line between Seistan and Birjand had been given to Pasand Khan under orders from Tehran and that neither the Russian nor the local Customs officials were likely to oppose its termination. In view of Pasand Khan's pro-Russian proclivities, and the part played by his men, in the Lab-i-Baring incident, he urged His Britannic Majesty's Legation to protest against the man's employment in any capacity on the two postal lines. The Persian Government at first refused to cancel the contracts, but Mr. Marling eventually arranged, with the concurrence of the Government of India, for a settlement of the case by obtaining an undertaking from the Persian Government that they would not employ Pasand Khan or his tribesmen in future.

In November 1905, Captain Macpherson reported that Mons. Molitor, the Director of Customs, had at last received intimation that the status of the Customs bureau at Koh-i-Malik Siah, which had been established earlier in the year at the request of the Government of India as a matter of convenience for British Indian traders using the Nushki trade route, had been raised to that of a head office. Mons. de Bont, a customs official, was also posted to the bureau about the same time.

In January 1906, Mons. Molitor informed the British Consul that, in future, an increased passport fee would be levied on all foreign subjects. As the enhanced fee would press severely on camelmen from India, Captain Macpherson referred to Tehran and was informed by Mr. Grant-Duff that the Mushir-ed-Dowleh had sent orders to Seistan that no change was to be made.

In May 1906, information was received that the boundary-pillars of a plot of land which the Ihtisham-ul-Vizara had formally marked out and made over to a

British Indian trader had been demolished by Russian agents, who had placed a guard on the plot, on the grounds that the site had already been purchased by the Russians—a statement which the Ihtisham denied. His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran brought the incident to the notice of the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran and subsequently instructed the British Consul in Seistan to communicate with his Russian colleague with a view to a joint and amicable settlement of the case, instructions to which effect had also been sent to the Russian Consul in Seistan from the Russian Legation at Tehran.

At the end of May 1906 M. Nekrassof, the Russian Consul, paid Captain Macpherson a visit to discuss the case. His two main arguments were that the Ihtisham had not the power to sell the site, and that the land was already the property of his telegraphist, who had acquired it with the lease of an adjacent house. Captain Macpherson explained his inability to accept the arguments, and offered to refer the whole case to Tehran. M. Nekrassof then promised to consult his telegraphist and see Captain Macpherson again. This he did a few days later when he and Lieutenant Daukes, who had meanwhile relieved Captain Macpherson of the charge of the Consulate, settled the case amicably between themselves. The question of the land was left out of the final discussion, the British Indian trader having withdrawn his application for the site, which he no longer required owing to the dislocation of trade caused by plague. As regards the demolition of the boundary-pillars and the despatch of a guard of Baluchis to the scene, the Russian Consul explained that these steps were not taken as a move against the British authorities, but owing to a report that some Persians were encroaching on the Russian telegraphists' houses. In the absence of definite proof to the contrary, Lieutenant Daukes accepted the explanation, and came to an arrangement with M. Nekrassof that in future British and Russian subjects should immediately refer to their respective Consuls all disputes in connection with land.

In February 1907, His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Seistan, proposed that on climatic and political grounds he should be permitted to spend the summer of 1907 in camp at Darmian in the Kainat, about forty miles east of Birjand, between which place and his camp communications should be established by means of a telephone. In March the Government of India, with the concurrence of His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran, granted permission to Major Kennion to spend the summer in camp on the condition that during his absence the duties at Seistan were undertaken by the medical officer, and that, as the proposed telephone was not feasible, the site selected for the summer head-quarters should be close to Birjand and on or near the telegraph line.

The Consul eventually selected Band-i-Darra, a village about six miles from Birjand, with which place communication was established by means of heliograph worked by the British telegraph signallers attached to the Consulate. Subsequently, sanction was given to the entertainment of certain additional postal sowars for the establishment of postal communication between the summer head-quarters and Seistan.

As the experimental move of the head-quarters to the Kainat met with sufficient success to justify its continuance, the Government of India in February 1908 granted Major Kennion permission to spend the ensuing summer in camp on the condition that the concurrence of His Britannic Majesty's Legation was obtained and that the move did not involve the grant of any increased allowances for the performances of duties in Seistan during his absence. The village of Salamabad, about a mile from the telegraph office of Sarbisha, was selected for the summer head-quarters during 1908.

Early in 1908 His Britannic Majesty's Consul in Seistan reported that the Hashmat-ul-Mulk had been persistently intriguing at Tehran against the Shaukat-ul-Mulk for the Governorship of Kain by offering large bribes. It was probable that he was only being squeezed by the Tehran authorities, but rumours of the likelihood of his success were at one time so prevalent that the Shaukat



seriously thought of making terms with his rival in order to avoid a recurrence of the former methods of bribery at Tehran. He consulted Major Kennion who assured him of British support, and advised him not to be bled. Major Kennion at the same time reported all the facts of the case to His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, and received a reassuring reply to the effect that it had been definitely decided that the Hashmat was not to be allowed to return to Seistan. The Shaukat was exceedingly grateful for the support given him by His Britannic Majesty's Legation.

On the 5th September 1908 His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Seistan, reported that news had reached Birjand that the Hashmat had secured the Governorship of Kain; and that this success, if true, would be disastrous to British interests, as it was well known that His Britannic Majesty's Legation at Tehran had in the past successfully intervened on behalf of the Shaukat-ul-Mulk, and that it was not unlikely that the change would result in disturbances.

The Government of India thereupon communicated the information to His Majesty's Government, and reiterated their objections to the appointment of the Hashmat under obligation to Russia. They trusted that His Majesty's Government would be able to secure the Shaukat-ul-Mulk's retention in the appointment.

In October His Britannic Majesty's Consul reported that the Shaukat-ul-Mulk had definitely made up his mind to abandon for the present all opposition to the Hashmat-ul-Mulk, and to stop all attempts at disturbances; and that his efforts were directed to getting an arbitrator sent from Tehran to preserve the peace between himself and the Hashmat. Major Kennion considered that the result might be satisfactory as far as the Shaukat personally was concerned, but that it could hardly be so to his followers and the people of Kain generally. The Shaukat hoped to make an attempt to regain the Governorship the following *Navroz*, or when circumstances appeared favourable. Mir Masum Khan, son of the Hashmat who was granted the title of Hashmat-ul-Mulk by the Shah, arrived at Birjand on the 5th October and took over the Governorship on behalf of the ex-Hashmat-ul-Mulk, who was given the title of Hisam-ud-Dowleh. The Hisam arrived in Birjand himself in November 1908. On the 20th September 1909 the Shaukat-ul-Mulk was reappointed Governor of Kain. There were no disturbances, notwithstanding Russian opposition to the change.

In reply to an enquiry on the subject of the retention of the Seistan branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia, which had been established, as an experimental measure in 1903 with Government assistance in the shape of an annual subsidy of £ 1,500, but which had not proved a financial success, the Government of India informed His Majesty's Government on the 22nd April 1908, that they considered the retention of the branch to be politically desirable even if it were necessary to make an addition to the subsidy to cover the present annual loss. They also suggested that in order to promote British Indian trade interests in Seistan the business of the branch might be enlarged on certain lines indicated by His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Seistan.

On the 15th April 1909, the Government of India suggested to His Majesty's Government the desirability of replacing the branch of the Imperial Bank of Persia in Seistan by an institution with a more elastic constitution. It was pointed out that, unless the constitution of the Imperial Bank was modified so as to admit of its undertaking trade agency business, its utility as a means for the furtherance of our trade interests largely failed. If, therefore, the Imperial Bank were unable to meet their wishes in the matter, the Government of India recommended that negotiations should be opened with the Imperial Bank of Persia and the Punjab Banking Company with a view to the transfer of the business to the latter company. No reply has as yet been received from His Majesty's Government on the point.

In October 1908, His Britannic Majesty's Consul, Seistan, reported that some concerted action of British and Russian Consuls in a local dispute. time previously the Deputy Governor of Seistan had ejected a *kathuda* of the village of Gurguri in Seistan, named Hussain Khan, a protégé of the Russians, and confiscated his lands on the ground that they had been fraudulently acquired. Hussain

Khan appealed to the Governor-General of Khorasan, who, in return for a sum of money, ordered the lands to be restored. The Deputy Governor then bribed the Governor-General who cancelled his orders, but Hussain Khan declined to accept the new decision and, with the help of the Russian Consul in Seistan and the Russian Legation at Tehran, secured an order from the Minister of the Interior for the restoration of the lands to him.

The Deputy Governor appealed against the order and asked the assistance of His Britannic Majesty's Consul, who brought the case to the notice of His Britannic Majesty's Minister. Major Kennion pointed out that neither we nor the Russians were directly concerned in the affair, but that following our unsuccessful attempt to retain the Shaukat-ul-Mulk in the Governorship of Kain, the result of the successful intervention of the Russians on behalf of Hussain Khan must be to diminish British influence and increase that of the Russians; he, accordingly, suggested that, if possible, orders should be obtained from the Persian Government giving the Deputy Governor discretion to settle the dispute without reference to either Consulate, and that these orders to be effective should be sent through the British Consulate. Sir G. Barclay informed Major Kennion at the time that on the facts before him he saw no occasion to complain to the Russian Legation, but, as a result of further information furnished by Major Kennion, His Britannic Majesty's Minister at Tehran spoke to the Russian Minister at Tehran regarding Russian interference in Seistan, and pointed out that such interference must inevitably lead to an appeal to us by the party against whom they intervene. The Russian Minister promised to instruct his Consul in Seistan to act in such cases in concert with Major Kennion. The latter was instructed by Sir G. Barclay to point out to his Russian colleague that the intervention of the Russians in the Gurguri case had resulted in an appeal to us from the other side which, however, had been rejected, apart from the merits of the case, in order that it might not appear that we were in conflict with the Russians.

Later His Britannic Majesty's Consul for Seistan and Kain reported that Mons. Bravine had told him that he had received orders from the Russian Minister to settle three matters in Seistan in communication with His Britannic Majesty's Consul, namely the Gurguri and Jehanabad cases and the case of Purdil Khan. He enquired what Major Kennion's wishes were. The latter said that he thought that it was a mistake for Mons. Bravine to take sides in cases. Mons. Bravine agreed and said that the cases had been taken up, in the first place, by his Legation and that he was merely carrying out orders; that the Jehanabad case was finished, and that, if the British Consul wished him to drop the Gurguri case, he would telegraph for permission to do so. Major Kennion thanked him and told him that he thought that this was certainly the most right and proper course. Mons. Bravine promised to telegraph to the Russian Minister. Subsequently it occurred to Major Kennion that it might be difficult for the Russian Consulate to drop the case after having gone so far, and he went next day to Mons. Bravine to suggest that, if this were so, he would have nothing to urge against the case being settled by independent arbitration. Mons. Bravine had, however, already telegraphed to the Russian Legation in the sense of the previous day's conversation.

In December His Britannic Majesty's Consul for Seistan and Kain reported that the village of Gurguri had been handed over by the Deputy Governor to Hussain Khan, the Russian protégé. Mons. Bravine informed Major Kennion that he had received no answer to his telegram to the Russian Legation, and that the matter had apparently been settled in Hussain Khan's favour "by the Karguzar."

On the 17th June 1908, His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran **Appointment of Baron von der Flaas** reported that the Russian Consul at Turbat-  
as Russian Military Attaché at Seistan. i-Haidari had informed the Shaukat-ul-Mulk that Baron von der Flaas, Colonel on the Staff of the General Officer Commanding Turkestan, had been appointed Military Attaché in Seistan.

The Secretary of State for India telegraphed that it had been suggested to the Foreign Office that the Russian Government should be asked not to give effect to the proposed appointment which would be inconsistent with the policy

underlying the recent Anglo-Russian agreement. Lord Morley pointed out that such a course might lead to a demand for the withdrawal of the British Military Attaché at Meshed, and asked for the views of the Government of India on the subject.

The Government of India replied that they attached great importance to the retention of the British Military Attaché at Meshed, and that they would not object to the appointment of a Russian Attaché at Seistan if by so doing the question of the Meshed appointment would be raised; that it was not improbable that the Russians were sending Colonel von der Flaas to Seistan with a view to proposing the abolition of both appointments hereafter; that the Russian Attaché in Seistan could not do much that the Russian Consul could not do; and that, as it was doubtful whether a man in Colonel Flaas' position would stay long in Seistan—the health of the last Russian Attaché there having broken down—it was better in the circumstances not to object to his appointment.

His Majesty's Representative at St. Petersburg having subsequently ascertained that Colonel von der Flaas was being appointed in place of Captain Dantal, who had died on his way home from Seistan, His Majesty's Government intimated that, so long as the British Military Attaché was retained at Meshed, the Russians could not be asked to withdraw their Attaché from Seistan, as the latter was not a new appointment.

In November 1908, Colonel von der Flaas put forward an application to be allowed to visit the British frontier post at Robat, permission being offered in return for British officers to visit Tashkent. The Government of India were disposed to think that the request could be acceded to, provided arrangements were made for a British officer to visit Kushk; and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran approved this course; and the matter was left to be settled in a friendly way between the British and Russian Consuls on these lines. But nothing further was heard of the matter.

Sir A. Hardinge, the British Minister at Tehran, who had recently visited Meshed, suggested that, as the British Consul at Resht, who was also the Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia, had not the leisure to visit Astrabad, a remote but important place in the Resht Consular district, an officer of the British Consular staff at Meshed or Turbat-i-Haidari should pay an annual visit of inspection to that place in order to report on the state of affairs to the British Legation at Tehran, who were dependent for such information on the newsletters of a native agent.

The Government of India informed His Majesty's Government that they considered that, in the circumstances described by Sir A. Hardinge, there was a good *prima facie* case in favour of the proposal; but they suggested that, before steps were taken to give effect to it, Sir A. Hardinge, who was in England at the time, should be consulted as to whether the proposal, if adopted, would be likely to cause offence to the Russian authorities and provoke retaliatory action on their part.

In February 1906, His Majesty's Government replied that Sir A. Hardinge, who had been consulted, was of opinion that although the Russians would probably dislike the proposed annual visit to Astrabad, they could not well resent it, or regard it as unfriendly, as there was already a British Vice-Consul accredited to the place who was, however, prevented from visiting the district by his duties as Manager of the Imperial Bank of Persia at Resht. His Majesty's Government therefore viewed the proposal with favour.

In April 1906, His Majesty's Government were informed that the necessary orders had been issued to the Consul-General at Meshed for an annual visit of inspection to be made to Astrabad by a British officer of the Meshed or Turbat-i-Haidari consulates.

In 1904 the Government of India had, on the advice of Lieutenant-Colonel Minchin, then Consul-General at Meshed, agreed to the enlistment in Khorasan of Hazaras for the Indian Army, as an experi-

Complaint by the Persian Government of the enlistment of Berberis (Hazaras) by the British Consul-General at Meshed.

ment, and on the express condition that it was done quietly and tactfully and that the men were sent to India in small parties so as not to attract attention. These orders were subsequently lost sight of and the recruits began to be sent to India in large batches. This naturally brought the matter to the notice of the Persian Government, and in November 1905 Mr. Grant-Duff reported that he had received a complaint from the Persian Government about the enlistment of Hazaras in Persian territory. Instructions were at once issued to Meshed to stop further recruiting, and for the Native recruiting officer to be sent back to India.

In November 1906, the British Consul-General at Meshed reported that his Russian colleague had written to him about a claim made by a Russian subject against two Afghans. The Russian Consul-General's letter ended :—" As affairs relating to Afghans are in charge of the British Consulate-General, I have ordered the Russian subject to take the bond to show you and explain matters. I beg you will kindly afford the relief he desires."

This was the first occasion on which the Russian Consulate had addressed the British Consulate about claims against Afghans, or formally admitted that affairs connected with Afghan subjects were matters for the British Consulate-General to deal with.

Some excitement arose in May 1910 in connection with a dispute over the ownership of some villages which Sardar Khudadad Khan marched into recently and occupied. The man in possession, Haji Saiyid Ali, a Mujtahid, had to leave and take refuge in Seistan. Orders were given by the Deputy Governor and the Basir-i-Nizam to the Sardar to vacate, but he refused to do so on the ground that the villages were his property having descended to him from his grandfather who received them by *firman* from Muzaffar-ud-din Shah.

On the 1st June 1910, Sardar Khudadad Khan called on Captain Hunter, British Vice-Consul in Seistan, with regard to the matter. After stating his case, he said he was prepared to fight, and that the other Baluch Chiefs were ready to help him. If we countenanced it, he would clear the place of Persian officials and hand over Seistan to the British Government. Should, however, he have to yield, he asked if we would give him employment if he became a British subject.

Captain Hunter replied that, although he sympathized with him, we could not help him, as the matter was one for settlement between the Persian officials and the Sardar, whom he advised against taking violent action.

The case still remained unsettled at the end of July 1910.

In November 1905, Captain Macpherson reported that the buildings which had been erected by the Seistan Mission at Kohak, and the disposal of which was under consideration, had been destroyed by fire under the orders of the Yamin-i-Nizam, the Persian Commissioner, without any previous intimation, and while they were still in the possession of the British Consul. On learning of the incident Mr. Grant-Duff asked for an explanation, and was informed by the Mushir-ed-Dowleh that the affair, which he regretted, was the result of a misunderstanding on his part.

His Majesty's Government, to whom the case was reported, instructed Mr. Grant-Duff to inform the Persian Government that they were greatly surprised at the action of the local Persian officials and expected suitable reparation and the reconstruction of the buildings. The Government of India suggested that reparation might take the form of permission for the construction of a telegraph line from Robat to Nasratabad, a project which had repeatedly been pressed on the Persian Government during Lord Curzon's term of office but invariably refused.

Mr. Grant-Duff next reported that the Persian Government had given a written undertaking to re-erect the buildings if required but had made no apology; and suggested that the matter should be pressed as there had been several cases of incivility on the part of Persian officials towards British officers, including the omission of the Persian representative to call on the British Legation.

tion at Tehran on the King's birthday. His Majesty's Government then instructed Mr. Grant-Duff to obtain a public apology for the demolition of the buildings, and to ask for their re-erection but not to press for the latter if the Persian Government was conciliatory in other respects, *e.g.*, with reference to the extension of the telegraph line from Robat to Nasratabad which was, however, to be treated as a set off to the permission accorded to the Russians some time previously to construct a telegraph line from Kuchan to Askabad. Mr. Grant-Duff was also told to point out to the Persian Government that their attitude towards the Robat-Nasratabad telegraph extension, coupled with the acts of the Yamin-i-Nizam, was calculated to produce the worst possible impression on His Majesty's Government, and that this would be best effaced by a spontaneous offer on the part of the Shah's Government to construct the line.

The Persian Government declined to consider the question of the telegraph extension, but early in January the Deputy Governor of Seistan and the Yamin-i-Nizam called at the British Consulate in full uniform and offered a suitable apology which Captain Macpherson accepted. The question of the re-erection of the bulidings was not pressed.

The question of the telegraph extension hung fire until March 1910, when His Majesty's Minister at Tehran reported that the Persian Government were themselves contemplating the construction of the line in question—*viz.*, from Koh-i-Malik Siah (Robat) to Seistan (Nasratabad); and suggested that His Majesty's Government should offer financial or other assistance on the condition that the line should be under the control of the Indo-European Telegraph Department. His Majesty's Government agreed to the same conditions being offered to the Persian Government in connection with this line as were prescribed in July 1907, *viz.*, the line to be constructed by the Indo-European Telegraph Department as a Persian Crown line, at a price not exceeding expenditure shown to be necessary, and to be handed over to the Persian Telegraph Administration on completion and repayment of cost; that none but Persian and British employes would be allowed; and that the Persian Government should give a pledge that the control of the line would never be made over to any foreign Government or Company other than British. His Majesty's Government also offered to sell to the Persian Government for this line the telegraph material lying stored at Robat at its full rate list value, exclusive of cost of transport and construction of the line by the Indo-European Telegraph Department. At the same time His Britannic Majesty's Minister was informed that while the conditions should be offered to the Persian authorities at once, the negotiations should be delayed until the control of the Seistan-Khaf line has been transferred to the British Government, and that the question of the proposed line should be dealt with as a departmental matter.

This was the position of the matter at the close of the period under review.

The transfer of the head-quarters of the Russian Consul at Seistan to Birjand necessitated the establishment of a Consular appointment. British Vice-Consulate at that place, and Mr. W. R. Howson, a signaller of the Indian Telegraph Department who had been in Seistan for several years, was appointed as His Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul in addition to his other duties.

## APPENDIX I.

*Personnel.*—Mr. Grant-Duff acted as His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Tehran, until the 1st October when Sir C. Spring-Rice, the newly-appointed Minister, arrived at the capital.

Relations between His Majesty's Minister and the French Legation at Tehran were extremely cordial during 1906. M. Descos, the newly-appointed French Minister, was instructed by his Government to offer his good offices should they be required to facilitating and ensuring good relations between the English and Russian Legations.

Count Rex, German Minister in Persia since 1898, left in May for Germany and was succeeded by M. Stemrich, Consul-General at Constantinople, a very able commercial official, indicative of German interest in Persia.

M. de Speyer, Russian Minister at Tehran, was recalled and succeeded by M. Hartwig of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Major P. Z. Cox, C.I.E., continued as Political Resident in the Persian Gulf throughout the year.

Mr. Richards, His Majesty's Vice-Consul, Bushire, proceeded on leave in May 1906 and was succeeded by Mr. H. G. Chick, Consular Assistant at His Majesty's Legation at Tehran, who proceeded to join the post in October 1906.

Lieutenant Ogilvie arrived at Bam in June 1906 and took over the duties of His Majesty's Vice-Consul in succession to Asghar Ali Beg (deceased).

Mr. J. H. H. Bill took over the duties of First Assistant to the Resident in the Persian Gulf in July 1906, *vice* Captain A. P. Trevor.

Lieutenant Shakespear was succeeded in July 1906 as His Majesty's Consul, Bandar Abbas, by Lieutenant C. H. Gabriel.

Major C. T. Ducat took over the duties of His Majesty's Consul, Kerman, on the 13th of October 1906 from Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. M. Stewart.

Captain L. B. H. Haworth assumed charge of the Consulate at Kermanshah on the 11th October 1906 from Captain H. Crossle, I.M.S., who had held charge since Captain H. A. K. Gough's departure on leave in August 1906.

The Mohtashem-es-Sultaneh was appointed Persian Minister in London in November 1906. He is considered to be a popular, agreeable and cultivated Persian official. In 1896 he held the office of first Under Secretary to the Foreign Office, in which capacity he was favourably known to the Tehran Legation. In 1905 he accompanied the late Shah to Europe.

In May 1907 Vice-Consular rank was conferred upon Captain Crossle, the Consular Surgeon at Kermanshah.

On the 29th June 1907 Doctor Etienne Justin Schneider, the President of the Sanitary Council at Tehran, was appointed to be an Honorary Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire.

In April 1907, Sir C. Spring-Rice reported that the Persian Government desired to confer the order of the Lion and the Sun (Second class) on Doctor Joseph Scott, Medical Officer of the Indo-European Telegraph Department in Tehran.

In November 1907, Mr. Marling reported that the Dutch Minister had obtained the consent of the Persian Government to the appointment of a Dutch Consular Officer at Ahwaz.

*Tehran.*—M. de laMartiniere, the French Minister, left Tehran on the 15th May 1908, and was succeeded by M. Reymond Lecomte, who arrived at Tehran on the 17th June 1908.

Mr. Passek, Russian Consul-General at Bushire, was reported to have been appointed Russian Consul-General at Tehran in June 1908, under a new arrangement, by which the Legation Consulate-General will be entirely separate.

Sir G. Barclay arrived at Tehran on the 1st of October 1908, and presented his credentials to the Shah on the 3rd. He remained in office during the year.

Mr. Marling who had acted as Chargé d'Affaires since October 1907, left Tehran on the 6th October 1908.

M. deSturler, the Dutch Minister, left Tehran on the 10th November 1908 to join his new appointment at Athens.

M. Sabline arrived at Tehran on the 11th November 1908, and took over charge of the Russian Legation on the 15th from M. deHartwig, who left for St. Petersburg. M. Sabline remained in office during the year.

Nassouhi Bey, Turkish Ambassador, left Tehran on the 14th November 1908, and the First Secretary, Cherfuddin Bey, took over charge of the Turkish Legation.

*Shiraz*.—Mr. Bill took over charge of the duties of His Majesty's Consul at Shiraz in April 1908, and remained in office during the year.

*Kermanshah*.—Captain\*\* Howarth remained in charge of His Britannic Majesty's Consulate at Kermanshah.

*Ahwaz*.—Captain Lorimer remained in charge of the Consulate at Ahwaz during the year.

*Bandar Abbas*.—M. Ovseenko, Russian Consul at Bandar Abbas, left for Russia on the 5th of October 1908.

Lieutenant Gabriel, His Majesty's Consul, proceeded on sick leave on the 6th October 1908.

Captain Shakespear took over charge of the duties of His Majesty's Consulate on the 25th November 1908, and remained in office during the year.

*Bushire*.—Major P. Z. Cox, C.S.I., C.I.E., remained in charge of the Residency during the year.

M. V. Kadloubowsky arrived at Bushire on the 20th November 1908 to succeed M. Miller as Russian Consul-General.

*Bahrain*.—Major F. B. Prideaux held the post of Political Agent, Bahrain, throughout the year.

*Kuwait*.—Major S. G. Knox held the post of Political Agent throughout the year.

*Shiraz*.—Mr. Bill took combined leave in April 1910 and was replaced by Mr. T. G. Grahame of the Levant Consular Service.

*Kermanshah*.—Captain Howarth took combined leave in July 1909 and was replaced by Mr. W. Macdouall of the Levant Consular Service.

*Mohammerah*.—Mr. W. Macdouall of the Levant Consular Service was transferred and replaced by Lieutenant A. T. Wilson.

*Ahwaz*.—Captain Lorimer took combined leave in April 1909 and was replaced by Lieutenant J. G. L. Ranking.

*Bandar Abbas*.—Captain Shakespear was transferred to Kuwait and was replaced by Captain M. E. Rae in May 1909. Captain Rae was granted combined leave in May 1910 and was replaced by Captain H. V. Biscoe.

*Bushire*.—Lieutenant-Colonel P. Z. Cox was away on leave and deputation from 25th August 1909 to 31st March 1910 and during his absence Major A. P. Trevor officiated as Resident, in addition to his own duties as First Assistant.

*Bahrain*.—Major Prideaux was granted long leave in May 1909 and was replaced by Captain C. F. Mackenzie.

*Kuwait*.—Major Knox was granted long leave in May 1909 and was replaced by Captain W. H. I. Shakespear.

*Kerman*.—Major C. T. Ducat was transferred in April 1910 and was replaced by Lieutenant-Colonel T. W. Haig.

*Khorasan*.—During the period of this Summary British interests in the province of Khorasan were represented by Major P. M. Sykes, C.M.G., Consul-General at Meshed. His relations with the Asaf-ud-Dowleh, Governor-General of Khorasan, were excellent and no trouble was experienced in getting British cases settled. During November 1905, Major Sykes toured along the Persian frontier from Karez to Pul-i-Khatun and was well received at all the places he visited.

British interests in the province of Khorasan during the period of this Summary were represented by the following officers :—

From 1st to 20th April 1906 by Major P. M. Sykes, C.M.G.

„ 21st April to 16th May 1906, by Captain W. R. Battye, I.M.S.

„ 17th May to 26th November 1906, by Major R. L. Kennion.

„ 27th November to 9th December 1906, by Captain W. R. Battye, I.M.S.

„ 10th December 1906 to 31st March 1907, by Major P. M. Sykes, C.M.G.

The post of His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General and Agent to the Government of India in Khorasan was held during the period of this Summary by Major P. M. Sykes, C.M.G., and the post of His Britannic Majesty's Consul in Seistan, by Major R. L. Kennion. Captain T. H. Keys held the appointment of His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Turbat-i-Haidari until



the 12th July 1908 when he proceeded on leave. Captain J. H. Watson, I.M.S., the Medical Officer of the Consulate, then held charge of the current duties of the post until the 7th January 1909, when he was relieved by Captain A. J. H. Grey, the present incumbent.

Major Sykes was granted leave for 7 months and 15 days in April 1910 and Major W. F. T. O'Connor from Seistan was appointed to officiate as Consul-General, Meshed, during Major Sykes' absence, Major F. MacConaghey replacing Major O'Connor in Seistan.

The Consulate at Turbat-i-Haidari was abolished and replaced by a Native Agency on the grant of leave to Captain Grey in March 1910.

*Seistan.*—British interests in Seistan were represented, during the period of this Summary, by Captain A. D. Macpherson, Consul for Seistan and Kain.

British interests in Seistan during the period of this Summary were represented by the following officers :—

1st April to 4th June 1906, by Captain A. D. Macpherson.

5th June to 27th December 1906, by Lieutenant C. T. Daukes.

28th December 1906 to 31st March 1907, by Major R. L. Kennion.

Major W. F. O'Connor, C.I.E., who was appointed His Britannic Majesty's Consul for Seistan and Kain, *vice* Major Kennion granted leave, assumed charge of his duties on 6th September 1909.

Major O'Connor was transferred to Meshed in May 1910 and replaced in Seistan by Major F. MacConaghey.

Mr. C. M. Marling, C.M.G., took over charge of His Majesty's Legation at Tehran from Sir G. Barclay on the 20th April 1910.

Major P.M. Sykes, His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Meshed, left on the 6th April for England on leave. He has been succeeded by Major W. F. O'Connor, C.I.E., His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Seistan, who arrived at Meshed on the 28th idem. Major O'Connor will be succeeded by Major F. MacConaghey in Seistan.

Major F. MacConaghey took over charge of the Seistan Consulate from Major W. F. O'Connor, C.I.E., at Meshed, on the 7th May 1910.

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## APPENDIX II.

(Referred to on page 19, Chapter I of the text.)

The following is the text of the Arabistan Convention :—

*Article I.*—To improve the telegraphic communication between Borasjun and Moham-merah, and Borasjun and Dizful, it is arranged that from the date of this agreement until January 1945 the above-mentioned telegraph lines shall be under the control and supervision of the British Government Telegraph officials now controlling the International lines in Persia.

*Article II.*—The British Government agrees to pay for the cost of the construction and the establishment of the above-mentioned lines, such as iron posts, wire, insulators, etc., which may be required, up to £5,000, and also to pay an annual sum of £300 on account of the maintenance of the above-mentioned lines, and the pay of a mechanician up to the year 1945. Other expenses, such as the changing of the wooden posts for iron ones, and the annual expenses of the maintenance of the above-mentioned lines, which may be in excess of the £5,000 and the annual amount of £300, shall, after the completion of the work and the submission of the accounts, be paid gradually to the British Telegraph Department by the Persian Government.

*Article III.*—In return for the expenses incurred gratis by the British Government, and referred to in Article II for the construction and maintenance of the above-mentioned lines, the Persian Government agrees to consider the following Conventions to be in force and binding up to the 1st January 1945 :—the Telegraph Convention of 2nd April 1868 ; the Telegraph Convention of 2nd December 1872 ; the Telegraph Convention of 16th August 1901.

*Article IV.*—The pay of the telegraphists and other workmen, such as gholams and far-rashes, batteries and instruments, and the hire of telegraph offices, will be borne by the Persian Telegraph Department.

*Article V.*—Guards and telegraph gholams, who must be Persians, will be required for the maintenance of the above-mentioned lines ; the control and payment of these will be in the hands of the Director and British staff.

*Article VI.*—In order to ensure the proper working of these telegraph lines, the British Director will be at liberty to station British telegraphists, at the expense of the British Government Telegraph Department, at any telegraph office on the above-mentioned lines which he may consider necessary.

*Article VII.*—In case of necessity, and with the permission of the Persian Government Telegraph Department, the British Government Telegraph Department can join the above-mentioned lines at their eastern extremity to the line between Tehran and Bushire.

*Article VIII.*—If the British Government Telegraph Department considers it necessary, it can, at its own expense, add a second line for its own use to the above-mentioned lines.

*Article IX.*—The Persian Government agrees not to employ in the telegraph offices of the above-mentioned lines, without the concurrence of the chiefs of the British Telegraph Department, any one except Persian subjects or members of the British Government Telegraph Department.

*Article X.*—It is agreed that, should the Persian Government in the future wish to extend the above-mentioned lines in any direction, the co-operation of the Indo-European Telegraph Department in the construction and maintenance of such extension will be asked for.

An exchange of notes was at the same time made with the Persian Government, to the effect that the Convention would require the approval of the Persian National Assembly.

## APPENDIX III.

(Referred to at page 13, Chapter I of the text.)

The conditions of the proposed joint advance to Persia by Great Britain and Russia, during the early part of 1910 as agreed to between the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran, and concurred in by Sir E. Grey, were as follows :—

(1) The formation of a Commission presided over by the Minister of Finance and composed of M. Bizot and M. Mornard, two members of the Medjliss and two other Persians to control the expenditure of the money according to the programme approved by the two Legations ; that all payments to any department should be made only with the approval of the commission and of the Minister whose department is concerned, and with the signature of the Minister of Finance ; that approval of the programme of expenditure should be withheld unless it provides for the engagement of seven Frenchmen in the Ministry of Finance, with executive powers in accordance with the recommendations contained in a report which M. Bizot was submitting to the Persian Government ; that, until the Persian Government have formally applied to the French Government for the loan of these experts, no part of the advance should be paid. (2) The formation of a proper gendarmerie for the protection of the roads, under foreign instructors acceptable to the two Powers. (3) Approval of the programme of expenditure to be withheld unless it provides for the protection of the trade routes by the formation of sufficient gendarmerie, or road guards, and an undertaking to be given by the Persian Government to engage foreign instructors, in due course and with the previous approval of the two Powers. Without the previous consent of the two Powers no foreign instructor for any Persian force should be engaged. (4) In the construction of any railways in Persia which Great Britain or Russia judge to be of interest to themselves, Persia must admit the preferential rights of the two Powers as against third parties on equal terms. In the case of a concession sought by a Persian for construction and exploitation, with exclusively Persian capital, this condition does not apply. (5) The Urumia Lake navigation concession must be granted to the Tabriz Road Company by the Persian Government. (6) If the larger loan already asked for by the Persian Government is granted, the advance is to be a first charge on it ; failing this, repayment must be made in ten annual instalments, together with interest at 6 per cent., the mint profits being security for both principal and interest.

The Russian Government, after a consideration of these conditions, agreed to accept them as the basis for negotiations with the Persian Government. As former loans bore interest at 9 to 12 per cent., and a future external loan could hardly be raised at a less rate of interest than 7 or 8 per cent., the Russian Government held that the interest on the proposed advance should be at least 7 per cent., but preferably 8 per cent., and that the profits from the mint should serve as a supplementary guarantee, the Customs revenue being the first security. The Russian Government further urged that condition (4), referring to the question of railways, should be so drafted as to exclude the possibility of detriment to Russian and British interests arising from the formation of fictitious Persian companies for railway construction with foreign capital. M. Poklewski was instructed as above, while Sir E. Grey, in authorising Sir G. Barclay to concert with his Russian colleague, expressed a hope that the latter would agree to 7 per cent. interest instead of 8 per cent. As regards condition (4), Sir E. Grey suggested the following wording :—“ Persia will grant no concession for railway lines without previously offering the British and Russian Governments the option of constructing such lines. The British and Russian Governments will not exercise this option in the case of a concession which they are satisfied is to be granted to a Persian subject for construction and exploitation by exclusively Persian capital.” It was, however, to be made clear that the term “ Persian capital ” would of course include a combination of Persian and Russian or British capital.

The Persian Minister of Finance and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs discussed the conditions with the British and Russian Ministers at Tehran. The Persian Representatives said, that in principle, the Cabinet was entirely in favour of a joint advance and hoped that their difficult task of securing its acceptance by the Medjliss would be facilitated by the British and Russian Ministers. As regards condition (3), it appeared probable that the Cabinet feared an early demand for the appointment of Russian military instructors. It was, however, pointed out by the British and Russian Ministers that the expression “ as soon as possible ” instead of as originally proposed “ in due course ” was intentionally vague, and that no time had been fixed for the engagement of foreign instructors. The explanation seemed to relieve the Minister of Finance. The Persian Representatives contended that, if condition (4) was accepted, all outside applications would practically be prevented, as no one would come forward, since it would be known that Russia and Great Britain must have the refusal of any railway concession. It was pointed out to the Persian representatives that it could not be expected that the two neighbouring Powers should acquiesce in the grant to a third party of such railway concessions as were of interest to them ; and that the two Governments would always expect a refusal of such concessions, even if this were not

attached to the advance. It was further added that, whether an advance were made or not, this condition, as also the one precluding the employment of foreign instructors for any armed force without British and Russian approval, were part of a settled policy which would be pursued. Condition (6) was then discussed. The Persian Government regarded the small advance (the conditions of which had aroused apprehensions as to the demands in connection with the large loan) as inseparable from the larger loan, and were anxious for an assurance that no further conditions, except such as related to the loan itself, interest and security, etc., should be attached to the loan. The British and Russian Ministers said that no such assurance could be given, but that as the large loan, if made, would leave little surplus and would be mainly for conversion purposes, they did not anticipate the imposition of any conditions which the Persian Government could regard as very formidable.

## APPENDIX IV.

(Referred to at page 16, Chapter I of the text.)

The following is the text of the document regarding the exchange of telegraph lines which was signed by Sir A. Nicolson and M. Isvolsky on the 31st August 1907 :—

Le télégraphe de Téhéran-Méched, rentrant en entier dans la zone mentionnée dans l'Article I de l'Arrangement concernant la Perse, passera dans le ressort de l'Administration Russe aux mêmes conditions auxquelles il se trouve actuellement dans le ressort de l'Administration Anglaise.

2. Vu qu'une partie du télégraphe Méched-Séistan traverse la zone susmentionnée, cette ligne est divisée en deux sections à Khaf ; la section au nord de ce point ressortit de l'Administration Russe et la section au sud du même point ressortit de l'Administration Anglaise, aux mêmes conditions en ce qui regarde les deux sections de la ligne, auxquelles le télégraphe se trouve actuellement dans le ressort de l'Administration Russe.

3. Vu qu'un régime mixte sur une ligne télégraphique présente, ainsi que le démontre la pratique, de nombreux désavantages, deux commutateurs seront placés à Khaf, l'un pour le fil Russe, et l'autre pour le fil Anglais. Afin d'éviter des retards dans le service des télégrammes vu que la ligne une et entière de Méched à Séistan est ainsi divisée en deux lignes distinctes et indépendantes, le commutateur Russe pourra être relié au commutateur Anglais.

4. Tous les droits, obligations, et dépenses en ce qui regarde l'entretien, l'inspection, le contrôle, et les réparations des lignes se trouvant du ressort de l'Administration Anglaise incomberont à l'Angleterre, et de celles se trouvant du ressort de l'Administration Russe, à la Russie. Il va de soi qu'il ne s'agit que de la somme de droits, obligations, et dépenses qui reviennent actuellement à l'Angleterre ou à la Russie sur les lignes respectives de Méched-Téhéran et Méched-Séistan.

5. Les Gouvernements de la Grande-Bretagne et de Russie chargeront leurs Représentants à Téhéran de faire conjointement des démarches auprès du Gouvernement Persan à l'effet d'obtenir le consentement de celui-ci aux mesures indiquées ci-dessus.

Fait à Saint-Pétersbourg, en double exemplaire, le 18 (31) Août, 1907.

—C 744 F. D.

## APPENDIX V.

(Referred to on page 16, Chapter I of the text.)

*Draft memorandum of working arrangements, between the British and Russian Governments, on the transfer of the control of the Tehran-Meshed line, and of the Khaf-Nasratabad section of the Meshed-Nasratabad line.*

When the transfers of the control of the Tehran-Meshed telegraph line from the charge of the British authorities to that of the Russian authorities, and of the Khaf-Nasratabad section of the Meshed-Nasratabad telegraph line from the charge of the Russian authorities to that of the British authorities have been agreed to by the Persian Government, the following arrangements will be carried out on the lines, the control of which has been thus transferred :—

### 1. Tehran-Meshed Line.

(a) The British authorities will remove from the line all the British staff employed on the maintenance, repair, and general upkeep of the line and the duties connected therewith will be undertaken from the date of this removal by officials appointed by the Russian authorities, and will remain in their sole charge.

(b) For the efficient transmission of British telegrams over the line a British telegraphist will be retained at Tehran, and one at Meshed.

(c) The use of the telegraph line will be given by the Russian officials to these British telegraphists daily at stated hours, and for certain fixed periods distributed over the day and arranged in a suitable and equitable manner for the disposal of traffic.

(d) The Persian Telegraph Administration has provided separate signalling rooms for the Russian and British telegraphists in the telegraph offices at Tehran and Meshed. At each of these offices the line wire terminates at present in the British room, is then connected by a commutator to the Persian signal room where another commutator joins it over to the Russian room. When the transfer of control takes place, the line wire will be terminated in the Russian rooms of the two offices, and have connection by commutators with the British and Persian rooms.

### 2. Meshed-Khaf Telegraph Line.

(a) The duties of maintaining, repairing, and supervising the line itself will remain, as at present, in the hands of the Russian telegraph officials.

(b) For the efficient transmission of British telegrams one British telegraphist will be retained at Meshed, one at Turbat-i-Haidari, and one at Khaf.

(c) The use of the telegraph line will be given by the Russian officials to these British telegraphists under conditions similar to those prescribed in paragraph 1 (c) (d) for the transmission of British telegrams over the Tehran-Meshed line and for office arrangements of commutators and connections.

### 3. Khaf-Nasratabad Telegraph Line.

(a) The Russian authorities will remove from the line all the Russian staff employed on the maintenance, repair, and general upkeep of the line, and the duties connected therewith will from the date of this removal be undertaken by officials appointed by the British authorities and will remain in their sole charge.

(b) For the efficient transmission of Russian telegrams over the line one Russian telegraphist will be retained at Nasratabad, one at Birjand, and one at Khaf.

(c) The use of the telegraph line will be given by the British telegraph officials to these Russian telegraphists under conditions similar to those prescribed in paragraph 1 (c) for the transmission of British telegrams over the Tehran-Meshed line.

(d) The line wire will be terminated in the British room of the different offices and connected by commutators to the Russian and Persian office rooms.

4. At any telegraph station worked jointly by Russian and British telegraphists where rooms for separate use by the Russian, British and Persian telegraphists are not available and cannot be provided, the Persian office room will be used by the Russian and British telegraphists at the hours fixed for the transmission of their respective telegrams.

## APPENDIX VI.

(Referred to on page 10 of the text.)

## AGREEMENT.

In conformity with the negotiations which have taken place between the Persian Government and the Imperial Bank of Persia, it is hereby agreed that—

(1) The consolidation of the several amounts due to the Imperial Bank of Persia according to the statement rendered to and accepted by the Persian Government, is hereby effected, and the interest payable thereon from the 21st March 1910 is fixed at the rate of 7 per cent. per annum.

(2) Payment of interest on the loan and redemption of the capital will be effected by the Persian Government paying the yearly instalments amounting to Krs. 3,729,390·95 as set forth in clause No. 3 in proportional monthly amounts of Krs. 310,782·60 covering a period of 15 years from the 21st March 1910.

(3) As security for the debt and as guarantee for the payment of the yearly instalment of Krs. 3,729, 390·95 agreed upon, the full net Customs receipts of the Persian Gulf ports including Bushire, Bandar Abbas, Lingah, Mohammerah and Ahwaz are hereby made payable to the Imperial Bank of Persia, and the Persian Government bind themselves by the terms of this agreement to pay exclusively to the Imperial Bank of Persia all such Customs receipts with no deduction save that of the actual expenses of administration of the Customs of the above named ports, for a period of 15 years or until such time as the debts shall be totally extinguished.

(4) The Imperial Customs will pay to the Imperial Bank of Persia, week by week, the above-mentioned Customs receipts of the whole of the Persian Gulf ports including Mohammerah and Ahwaz, and the Imperial Bank of Persia will render to the Persian Government monthly, on the 21st of each month accounts of all such receipts, and the surplus remaining after due provision has been made from such funds to meet the amount required for amortization of capital and payment of interest month by month—shall be at the disposal of the Persian Government.

(5) In the event of the receipts of the above-mentioned ports for any one month falling below the amount required for the service of the debt, the Persian Government binds itself to make good any such deficiency from other sources of Government revenue so as to fully meet the obligation to the Bank undertaken by the Southern Customs for the month in question.

(6) The Persian Government binds itself to discontinue all drafts on the Southern Customs other than for actual administrative expenses immediately connected with the collection of such receipts until the monthly amount due to the Bank shall have been paid.

(7) The Persian Government has the option of repaying the whole of the debt at the end of any one year, viz., 20th March, and it is agreed that notice will be given in writing two months before the end of any such year in which it is the intention of the Persian Government to take advantage of this option.

(8) The Imperial Bank of Persia will allow the Persian Government interest at the rate of 7 per cent. per annum on all funds paid in for the redemption of the loans from the day on which they are paid in to the date on which they are applied for that purpose.

(9) And it is further agreed that, as regards the sterling loan of £290,000 of 1903-04, the payment of the interest and redemption of capital—amounting on March 21st, 1910, with arrears, to £314,281-16-4—shall be paid off in 15 equal annual instalments of £30,278-12-7, and in case the other revenues affected to the service of the Loan by the Convention of the 1st September 1904 should prove insufficient, the Imperial Bank of Persia agrees, and is hereby authorised, to apply any surplus remaining over from the receipts of the above-mentioned Persian Gulf Ports after payment of the said monthly instalments (of Krs. 310,782·60) to the payment of the annual instalments of £30,278-12-7; the payment being made in equal monthly instalments as provided in Article 4 of the present Agreement. It is clearly understood that in all other respects the provisions of the Loan Convention of 1904 remain in full force.

In connection with the above Agreement, the Imperial Bank—(1) agreed to give the Persian Government credit in Tehran for any sums due from the Customs receipts on the same day as payment of these receipts was made to the Bank or its Agencies, and to arrange with the Customs for the cost of transmission of the money; (2) as approved by His Majesty's Government, intimated to the Persian Government the suspension till 21st March 1913 of payment of the annual instalments on the Anglo-Indian loan of 1903-04, interest only on the loan being payable till that date; (3) agreed, when the total debt had been reduced to the limits allowed in the Bank's concession, to allow that amount to stand over at the option of the Persian Government.



## APPENDIX VII.

(Referred to on page 77 of the text.)

*Copy of a despatch No. 24, dated the 21st February 1907, from the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India.*

We have the honour to address you on the subject of the arms trade at Maskat and in the Persian Gulf.

2. In our Secret-External despatch No. 112 of 1903, dated the 30th July 1903, we referred to the steps which had previously been taken with a view to check and control the traffic in arms, and we suggested for your consideration, some further measures which, in our opinion, might suitably be adopted in pursuance of this object. We recommended, in the first place, that the French Government should be asked to agree to the prohibition by the Sultan of Maskat of all importation of arms and ammunition into his dominions. In the second place, we drew attention to the fact that, as the importation of arms was illegal in the case of Persia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the Pirate Coast, it was desirable, in order to make the circle of the Gulf complete, that some understanding should be arrived at regarding Turkish territory also. We urged that, if possible, an agreement should be arranged with Turkey whereby vessels flying the Turkish flag could be searched by British ships of war, and, as an alternative, we suggested that, even if the Ottoman Government were not willing to grant to us the right of searching Turkish vessels, they might perhaps be prepared formally to notify to His Majesty's Government that the importation of arms into their dominions is prohibited. We consider that the issue of such a notification would place us in a position to invite the assistance of the Sultan of Maskat in restraining his subjects from the shipment of arms thither; and the excuse that they were bound for some part of the Turkish coast line could no longer be put forward by native craft sailing northwards from Oman. In reply to this despatch, we were informed, in your telegram, dated the 3rd November 1903, that the question of the suppression of the traffic had been informally broached by Lord Lansdowne to the French Ambassador, and that Sir N. O'Connor had been instructed to obtain from the Porte a formal notification to the effect that the importation of arms into Turkish dominions was prohibited.

3. In addressing Lord Lansdowne on the subject in his despatch,\* dated 16th November 1903, Sir N. O'Connor pointed out, however, that it would be inexpedient, in the circumstances explained by him, to invite a formal notification from the Porte, which might be given in a form to which His Majesty's Government would be obliged to demur, in view of the fact that negotiations for a commercial treaty between Great Britain and Turkey were still in suspense. Sir N. O'Connor referred to the fact that certain Regulations, notified by the Porte in 1893, after acceptance in the Turco-German Commercial Treaty, although not accepted by the other Powers, embodied the laws of Turkey in force against all nationalities other than those with whose treaties and capitulations they might clash. His Excellency, therefore, suggested that the notifications already made by the Porte might perhaps serve the purpose of the Government of India.

4. Having regard to this suggestion, the Government of India, in their Secret-External despatch No. 76, dated 31st March 1904, proposed that, as the proclamation by the Sultan of Maskat, dated the 13th January 1898, related only to arms and ammunition which were intended for Indian or Persian ports, and which were also the property of British Persian or Maskat subjects, the terms of the proclamation should be revised so as to make it applicable to arms intended for Turkish ports, and the property of any persons whatsoever. It was further proposed that the opportunity should be taken to amend the proclamation so as to make it applicable also to the case of arms consigned to the territories of the Shaikh of Bahrain, the Shaikh of Kuwait or of the Trucial Chiefs.

Finally, it was suggested that, as the Turkish Government were vitally interested in checking the trade in arms in Northern Arabia, they might perhaps be willing to agree to our searching all vessels in Kuwait waters without prejudice to the question of the authority under which the right would be exercised, or to our exercising such a right of search in Turkish territorial waters in the Persian Gulf outside the Shatt-el-Arab without referring specially to Kuwait.

5. In your predecessor's telegram, dated 24th June 1904, we were informed, however, that it had been decided to defer for the present fresh measures for restricting the importation of arms at Kuwait. This decision was arrived at because it was considered at the time that, if we prevented the importation of arms at Kuwait, we should assist the Turks in determining the supremacy in Nejd of the Turkish nominee Bin Rashid against Bin Saood, the friend of the Shaikh of Kuwait. Since June 1904 we have received no further direct communication from you on the subject of the above proposals for the suppression of the arms traffic, and while recognising to the full the serious nature of the diplomatic difficulties which have hitherto tied the hands of His Majesty's Government in the matter, we now venture to ask whether having regard to the considerations brought to notice below, it would be possible for a forward move to be made in the direction previously indicated by us.

6. The profound importance of the whole question is more apparent now than it has ever been before.

In paragraph 3 of our Secret-External despatch No. 112, dated 30th July 1903, we referred to a statement showing the total of arms and ammunition consigned to the Persian Gulf as indicated in returns received from the India Office. We noted that the figures showed a growing traffic up to 1900, when the number of rifled weapons imported into Maskat reached the total of 13,831, but that since that year there was evidence of a satisfactory decline. We also forwarded a statement prepared from figures furnished by the Customs authorities of the Sultan of Maskat from which we drew the inference that though the dimensions of the trade were still formidable, it had undoubtedly received a check since the year 1900. We now forward two similar statements covering the period which has elapsed since our despatch of 1903. We regret to note that but one conclusion can be drawn from these statements, namely, that there has been an alarming increase in the arms trade at Maskat. In spite of the fact that the local Oman market has long since been glutted, we have reason to believe that in the year 1904-05 the total number of rifles imported at Maskat was not less than 20,000, while the aggregate value of the rifles and ammunition landed there from Europe amounted to no less than £1,210,849. It is also significant that whereas in 1899-1900 about one-seventh of the imports were from France, by 1905 the proportion of French arms had risen to four-tenths. The third statement enclosed shows the number of reports which have reached us during the past year of the landing of arms at Maskat and at the other ports after transshipment from Maskat. It is worth noting in this connection that, according to reports from the Political Agent at Maskat, the Sultan has recently borrowed large sums of money from M. Goguyer, which will be repaid by deduction from the duty due by the firm on the large consignments of arms imported by them, while another French merchant, M. Caracalla, encouraged by the success of his predecessor, is about to open a business in arms and ammunition at Maskat.

7. We mentioned also in paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned despatch that the ultimate destination of the arms landed at Maskat was in a large measure conjectural. We stated that the existence of any considerable traffic with the African seaboard had not been established, and that it seemed probable that the consignments eventually found their way into the interior of Oman, to the Arab and Turkish coasts of the Gulf and to the Persian seaboard, a proportion reaching the tribes of the North-West Frontier of India, with results that constituted a grave menace to the peace of the border.

The information which has been received by us from time to time during the last three years has confirmed us in the opinion that no traffic in arms worth considering is carried ~~on~~ between Maskat and the African seaboard. Only one case has been reported in which 42 Gras rifles and 3,645 rounds of ammunition were supposed to have been shipped from Maskat to Socotra. Moreover on 17th October 1903, the Sultan of Maskat in deference to the wishes of the British and Italian Governments issued a notification prohibiting the export of arms and ammunition from his territories to the African coast and islands (including Socotra) under British protection and situated to the north of Cape Guardafui as also to the Italian possessions on the east coast of Africa.

8. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that by far the greater part of the arms landed at Maskat leave again by sea, and that Maskat has now earned the reputation of being the arm depôt of the entire Middle East. In our opinion it is hardly possible to exaggerate the injurious effects of this trade which has already undermined, to a great extent, the authority of the Persian and Turkish Governments in their own territories and is raising a luxuriant crop of difficulties for ourselves on the North-West Frontier of India and in Afghanistan. In the case of Oman and other Arab principalities in the Persian Gulf, the mischief, serious though it is, is localised, and does not directly threaten civilisation. An ominous note is, however, struck by the fact that already one or more Persian regiments have been broken up by the armed tribes of Luristan, while the Turks have sustained disasters in Hasa and Mesopotamia which are largely attributed to the present wide diffusion of modern rifles. It is estimated that along the Persian coast of the Gulf in many districts the proportion of rifles is now something like one per house.

9. But, from our point of view, by a far the most important aspect of the arms trade is its bearing upon the question of the supply of weapons to the tribes on the North-Western Frontier of India and to Afghanistan.

As stated in paragraph 2 of our above-mentioned despatch an arrangement was made in 1902 with the Persian Governor General of Kerman for the adoption of special measures to prevent the importation of arms into Persian Baluchistan and to impose restrictions on their possession in that province. In spite of this arrangement there is evidence that the arms have continued to be introduced with increasing frequency at the small ports as yet uncontrolled by the Persian Imperial Customs and in 1904 about 1,500 Martini-Henry rifles from Maskat are believed to have been landed at Galag alone, while, in January and February 1905, about 1,500 rifles with 10 cases of cartridges were brought ashore at the

same place. In 1901, in the course of the Mahsud blockade, overwhelming evidence was received of the arrival of a large consignment of Persian Gulf arms and ammunition in Waziristan, and there is now no doubt that Afghan and Baluchi dealers procure large quantities of arms from Maskat, which are mostly smuggled in sailing craft to lonely places on the coast near Bandar Abbas and Minab, whence they are picked up by the purchasers and carried inland concealed in camel litters and in the framework of camel saddles. From information in our possession we are led to believe that out of 270,000 men belonging to the frontier tribes, no less than 94,000 possess breech-loading rifled arms and so great now is the trade in such arms, and so completely is it beyond our control, that the time may come within the next few years when every fighting man will possess a modern weapon. The lucrativeness of the trade is illustrated by the fact that, in the present year, the price of a Martini-Henry rifle at Maskat is Rs. 25—40, while the same weapon sells at Herat for Rs. 100—125 and on the Frontier for Rs. 180—200. With regard to Afghanistan we recently received the disquieting intelligence that a number of rifles had reached the Herat and Kandahar districts and that they were being freely sold among the tribesmen with the approval of the local Afghan officials. The trade in these arms is no longer prohibited by the Amir in accordance with the policy pursued by his father, and His Majesty is reported to have stated openly that he has no objection to the acquisition of weapons of precision by his subjects and to have rewarded some of the principal men engaged in the trade. This fact alone, in our opinion, renders it essential that we should redouble our efforts to stop the traffic. The fourth statement forwarded with this despatch shows the number of cases of smuggling of rifles and ammunition to the North-West Frontier and Afghanistan that have come to our notice during the past year.

10. At the close of December 1905, the Agent to the Governor General in Baluchistan reported to the Government of India that news had been received from Maskat of the recent landing of considerable quantities of arms and ammunition on the Perso-Baluchistan coast east of Charbar. He suggested that Captain F. McConaghey, Assistant Political Agent for Mekran, should be deputed to tour in the areas in Persian Baluchistan where this traffic was reported to be in progress in co-operation with an official whom the Persian Government had intimated their intention of sending to deal with this matter. We agreed to this proposal, and Captain McConaghey was accordingly instructed in March 1906 to proceed to Chabar and confer with the Persian officials.

11. With our Secret despatch No. 185, External, dated the 20th December 1906, on the subject of the deputation of Lieutenant Ogilvie as Vice-Consul at Bam, we forwarded to you a copy of Captain McConaghey's report on the results of his mission with covering letters from the Political Agent, Kalat, and the Agent to the Governor-General. The result of his investigations is to show clearly that the portion of the arms trade which is conducted by ~~Afghans~~ was considerable in 1904-05 and was planned on a larger scale for the winter of 1905-06. There is a small trade on the coast by local traders who sell the weapons to local inhabitants and a larger one, which has recently increased, conducted by local inhabitants who supply the various tribes of Persian Baluchistan. Captain McConaghey has also furnished a useful description of the arms and ammunition in which the trade is carried on and a list of the harbours and routes used by the trade.

12. The local Political Officers have made various suggestions for interesting the Persian authorities in the stoppage of the traffic, and for rendering them such assistance as they may need in the matter. We are considering these suggestions and shall in due course pass such orders on them as may seem advisable. Apart, however, from the fact that there are political obstacles in the way of adopting some of the measures proposed, we regard it as certain that effective action for the suppression of the arms trade cannot be taken by the Persian authorities. On the coast, the Belgian Customs officials are few in number, and although, perhaps, willing to give assistance for the suppression of the traffic, they have not the means at their disposal really to take efficient measures to deal with the evil. Inland, as is well known, the Persian authorities are powerless outside the towns and large caravans can travel by unfrequented routes without the slightest risk of interference. It would be difficult now to secure the consent of the Persian authorities to our co-operation with them in capturing the smugglers, where alone such captures could be effectively carried out, on the Koh-i-Malik-Siah-Seistan frontier. Action there too might cause unrest amongst the Afghans, though we have reason to believe that the traders are men who live perhaps as much in British as in Afghan territory. Still, if the consent of the Persian Government could be obtained we should be prepared to try to stop this great and growing evil by some such action.

13. It remains to consider the possibility of taking action, either at the source of the trade, Maskat, or on the high seas. With regard to the latter alternative we forward herewith copies of two letters dated 26th April and 6th October 1906, from His Excellency the Naval Commander-in-Chief. We agree with him that, while the presence of a man-of-war at Maskat and in its vicinity acts as a deterrent on the export of arms to the Persian coast, yet the measure even combined with the patrol of the Mekran coast by a gunboat can never be really

efficacious. We hope that good effects may be produced on the traffic when the steam-launches which the Government of India are now building for the Persian Government are in

See Mr. Grant-Duff's letter to Sir E. Grey, commission, but we doubt whether these boats dated 29th June 1906. will be really employed to keep a sufficiently constant watch on the coast to prevent smuggling.

14. We are, therefore, forced to the conclusion that the arms traffic, with all its evil consequences, will continue to flourish and increase until the Agreement with the French which we have advocated is arrived at, and a complete prohibition is enforced against the importation of arms and ammunition into the territories of the Sultan of Maskat. If the Maskat emporium could be closed the necessity for resorting to other expedients, which at best are expensive makeshifts for the prevention of the trade, would be largely obviated and it might be hoped that the trade would automatically cease, not only in the direction of Afghanistan and India, but all round the Persian Gulf, as it would be much more difficult for arms to be smuggled into the Gulf Ports to any great extent by native vessels from Jibuti, though we should prefer that the regulations at that port also regarding the arms traffic should be made much more stringent. We realise that His Majesty's Government have considered it advisable to defer making any request to the French Government pending the settlement of the negotiations arising out of the Hague Arbitration Award. As, however, considerable concessions have been made and it now seems probable that the negotiations will result in an arrangement which should be satisfactory to the French Government, we entertain a hope that His Majesty's Government will regard the present moment as propitious for action in the matter of the arms trade. If so, we would venture to suggest that in approaching the French Government the nature and far-reaching consequences of the evils arising from the traffic might be explained, as they are probably not fully known except to yourselves and to the other countries which suffer. It might be pointed out that British trade would stand to lose more heavily even than French by the introduction of the reform proposed, as more than half the traffic is still in English hands. We have already, in a previous despatch, referred to the fact that the suggested change would only be an extension of the principle of the General Act of the Brussels Convention of 1890, whereby the traffic in arms is interdicted on the East African coast south of the 20th parallel of north latitude. The same principle, we understand, previously governed the question of the import of arms into China.

15. Next, with regard to the proposed negotiations with the Turkish Government, which, however, we regard as of secondary importance, and which should certainly not be allowed to delay action on what we regard as the vital question of stopping the trade at Maskat, we would draw attention to the fact that the progress of events since 1904 has rendered it no longer necessary to pay serious consideration to the arguments that measures concerted with the Turks for the pevention of the arms trade at Kuwait would unfairly handicap Bin Saood, the friend of the Shaikh of Kuwait, in his struggle for supremacy in Nejd against Bin Rashid, the nominee of the Turks. Bin Saood has lately succeeded in killing his rival, and for the present holds so strong a position in Nejd as to be practically independent of such indirect aid as we could afford him by conniving at the continuance of the arms trade with the interior. It is, therefore, not only justifiable, but even incumbent upon us to adopt any practicable measures for the suppression of the arms trade at Kuwait so far as we can do this without seriously alienating the Shaikh.

16. We, therefore, recommend that, having regard to the opinion of His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the Turkish notifications prohibiting the import of arms, and to the special agreements which have been made with the Shaikhs of Bahrain and Kuwait and with the Trucial Chiefs, the Maskat proclamation of 1898 should be revised in such a manner as to cover the export of arms from Maskat not only to Indian and Persian ports, but also to any port whatever in the Persian Gulf, including those of the Ottoman Empire. If our suggestion is approved, His Majesty's Government will doubtless consider the advisability of informing the Turkish Government of the proposal that the Sultan of Maskat should issue a proclamation extending to Turkish ports the prohibition to export arms. The Governments of the western countries concerned in the trade of Maskat would doubtless raise no objection as they have not protested against the measures taken by the Sultan to prevent the export of arms and ammunition to Persian and Indian ports and to the African coast and islands. If, however, there is any doubt with regard to the point, the Governments of France and of the United States might be asked to abrogate their rights as regards the export as well as regards the imports of arms.

17. We previously suggested that, in order to enlarge our powers as regards the seizure of arms, the words "and if they (the arms) are the property of British, Persian or Maskat subjects" should be omitted from the Maskat Proclamation. It is possible, however, that this proposal may be regarded as open to objection, as even Powers which have no treaty rights in the matter might be unwilling to acquiesce in the application to the property of their subjects of the powers of confiscation granted to British and Persian ships of war by the Maskat Proclamation. Powers which, like France, possess treaty rights with Maskat might be expected to exercise their right of protest unless they deliberately waived it. In these circumstances, we would merely recommend that, should the view be upheld that the Proclamation

of 1898 may be extended to the export of arms to the Ottoman Empire, the Island of Bahrain, Kuwait and the ports of the Trucial Chiefs the words "and if they are the property of British, Persian and Maskat subjects" might be amplified by the inclusion of subjects of these other countries. Subjects of France, and of the United States, and of Holland might also be included in the event of these nations agreeing to act in concert with us in the matter. Should it be found necessary to enter upon negotiations in regard to the matter with the Turkish Government, which might involve delay, we would recommend that the Proclamation may, at all events, be revised at once, as recommended, with reference to Bahrain, Kuwait and the ports of the Trucial Chiefs.

18. In this connection, with special reference to the question of the import of arms at Kuwait, we would commend for the further consideration of His Majesty's Government, the suggestion that the Turkish Government should be asked to consent to the exercise by British ships of war whether in Kuwait waters or in Turkish territorial waters in the Persian Gulf outside the Shatt-el-Arab of the right to search vessels, including those flying the Turkish flag, which may be suspected of carrying arms. It appears not improbable that the Porte will be inclined to consider favourably any proposals that His Majesty's Government may decide to put forward with the object of suppressing the arms traffic, since Sir N. O'Connor telegraphed to the Viceroy on 13th March 1906 that the Ottoman authorities were reporting constantly to the Porte that British officers were favouring the import of arms into Arabia and he anticipated that the Turkish Government might formulate an official complaint in the matter.

19. Finally, in the event which we trust is unlikely, of its being found impossible to concert measures with France for complete abolition of the arms trade in the near future, we would venture again to repeat the recommendation made in our Secret-External despatch, No. 156, dated the 18th August 1904, to the effect that in order to secure the arms trade remaining as far as possible, while it exists, in the hands of British subjects, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf may be authorised to cancel the rules issued in 1898 under which British subjects at Maskat are required to submit weekly statements to the Political Agent of the importation and sale by them of arms and ammunition.

20. In our Secret-External despatch No. 83, dated 21st April 1904, we referred to the danger which was springing up in the Aden Hinterland owing to the ease with which arms and ammunition were obtained throughout that dependency, and we drew particular attention to Jibuti where conditions existed, the continuance of which must, we stated, in a large measure frustrate the object of our endeavours at Maskat and in the Persian Gulf. We are now of opinion, however, that although the arms traffic from Jibuti and in the Red Sea at present is a matter of grave importance, yet, as stated in paragraph 7 above, it has no direct connection with the trade at Maskat or in the Persian Gulf.

We therefore propose to address you separately on the subject of the arms trade in the Red Sea in reply to your despatch No. 11, dated 23rd March 1906, on the subject.







